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THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON VIOLENCE IN
THE COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

RESEARCH REPORT

ASPECTS OF VIOLENCE IN THE
LITERATURE OF CHILDREN
AND YOUNG ADULTS
by
CLAIRE ENGLAND

Faculty of Library Science
University of Toronto

1976



PRE-PUBLICATION COPY


The views expressed in this report are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Royal Commission on Violence in the Communications Industry, whose conclusions will be presented in its Final Report.



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THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON VIOLENCE
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INTRODUCTION

This paper is concerned with the presence of violence in some areas of literature for children and for young adults. Children's literature exists almost independently of children in the sense that they neither produce, nor criticize, nor even always read widely within the material written for them. Children are taught to read at age six or so, and a scant half-dozen years later are eager to leave children's books behind in a desire to participate in adult reading. Children's reading preferences and habits are discussed in some detail in order to provide a context for the examination of their literature.

In a society of mass communication, a medium such as television, which requires only passive participation, may easily become dominant, while a medium such as reading, which involves an active interaction with print, may become subordinate. Reading is a skill which requires practice and personal commitment. The ability of some children to read may be at such a level as to preclude an interest in books.

Personal inclination, and sometimes deficient skills, are responsible for perpetuating a preference in

reading for material of little literary or artistic merit. The preference is encouraged for material that primarily bases its appeal on plot, with little regard for style, characterization, setting and so on. The sentimental interlude, the mysterious plot, the violent episode is exploited in the effort to meet a demand, which, if successful, the product also creates. Ease of reading and an entertaining strong story-line are important factors in the primary appeal of books to young children. When children first begin to appreciate stories, and first begin to read stories for themselves they are too young to be nostalgic, too immature to be contemplative, and too unskilled to be discriminating. Children are immediately responsive to the dramatic emphases both in their own literature and in the mass culture which is society's environment. Their reading, their language and lore, and their imaginations reflect in some measure, the presence of elements of violence.

The first body of literature that many children meet is the nursery tales from Mother Goose and from the realm of fairy and folk lore. Generations old, the accretions of nursery stories interest sociologists and psychologists for the insights that are present into social organization and the human psyche. Adult literature draws upon the mythological motifs present in this lore, and this

anonymous literature faithfully preserves those elements which children find useful. These timeless tales and the simple stories created especially for children are directed toward both the cognitive and affective domain of learning.

Illustration plays an obvious role in children's books. Pictures clarify symbols and situations, and pictures may also be addressed to the violent content in the literature. Illustrated books are ones in which the picture supplements the text, while picture books are ones in which the illustration carries the story. In both types of book, the violent activity can be emphasized or mitigated by the illustration. The role of illustration in relation to violence in children's books is considered in some detail in this paper.

A paper book is the child's first introduction to reading, and these pictures very often show the world of Mother Goose or introduce the fantastic land where animals are people and where fairies may suddenly appear.

It was not possible in this paper to consider all areas of children's literature, some areas have been overlooked. Among these, are the anthropomorphic stories written by individual authors for the young child. Numerous examples of these books come to mind, the Paddington Bear

or Dr. Seuss series, the delightful tales of Beatrix Potter, of Hans Christian Andersen or Oscar Wilde.

These stories all could be examined for elements of violence; some would contain violence in varying degrees and of varying kinds. However, these works were not considered, in part because of external constraints on these report, and, in goodly part, because these works are written by authors especially for a young audience. Many of these authors, being consciously aware of the vulnerability or age of the audience, are normally deliberate in the material they present to children. Violence when it occurs in these first fantasies may well be presented as a minor note in a coherent composition to serve a purpose. Some modern writers who have used violent themes are mentioned in the section on illustration, but the long-established authors who have made a controlled use of violence in the first stories given to children have not been considered. Young children are eager to read their first books. Fairy tale and simple story appear at a time when children are particularly receptive to story, and are yet without a preference in reading. The preference however is not long in developing, and for that reason, this paper does not consider certain areas such as science fiction, mythology, westerns or mysteries. Reading in these categories tends to be from strong personal preference.

Mythology, for example, is the literature of archetype and the repository of a cultural heritage. Mythology as expressed in short tales and in epic literature contains much violence. The physical violence is often couched in extravagant terms while the psychological violence may be layered in symbol. A study of Classical and Northern mythology would result in many examples of covert and overt violence, but this mythology is not widely read by children. Girls who read well may tend to develop an early interest in mythology, just as boys who read well and widely tend to develop an interest in science fiction. By and large these categories of reading are minority pursuits among young adolescents.

Generally, most children pursue a more narrow course in their reading. As food for their fantasy life, their preference may be for comic books. As food for their intellectual and emotional life, their reading may be extended into juvenile novels, a junior version of the adult novels. A section of this report deals with the realistic junior novel, a genre that came into its own in the 1960's with the swell of publication of a waiting adolescent market. At the same time as adolescents are reading these junior novels, they are also reading the literature produced for the adult market. Evidence on this point is presented in the section on children's reading.

In a span of perhaps five to seven years, children have reviewed the literature written especially for them. If lacking guidance in that review, they may have overlooked material that would have promoted intellectual and emotional growth in terms of an acceptable value system stressing concepts of respect for the individual and of responsibility for society. Children may have read extensively in material where violence is presented as a universally appropriate and attractive solution to problems.

As a didactic purpose underlies much of the material given to children or adolescents, there is often a moral judgment placed on the display of violence. The danger is that the value judgment is not internalized, or even realized, by the children. The moral tag is sometimes so submerged, as to be lost, in the description of violence. The danger lies then, not in presenting violence but in advocating it, by repeated example, as redress and resolution for many situations.

Violence has its place in the literature of childhood as in the literature of adulthood. Violence in literature should not teach the child to be violent, not to accept or to expect violence, rather the literature should teach the child to control violence and to relegate it to an appropriate position. Literature should help children to distinguish these facets of violence as a

reaction. How successfully and to what extent, the literature read by children and young adults does this, is another question.

CHILDREN'S READING

The reading abilities and habits of children and young adults have been assessed in numerous studies. The apparent conclusion from sifting much of the evidence might be that generally children do not read as much or as well as they did, one or two generations ago. Nor do they read as many books of literary value. However, comparisons between the 30's, the 50's, and the 70's cannot be made directly because of changes in the pattern of education and because of the emergence of alternatives to literary pursuit in the form of mass paperback publication, comic books, television, the recording industry and organized sports for youngsters. The conclusions then about comparative studies in reading must be open to qualification.

A government report, A Language for Life, issued in the United Kingdom in 1975 state that:¹

There is no firm evidence upon which to base comparison between standards of English today and those of before the war, and comparisons ventured are sometimes based on questionable assumptions. Nevertheless, standards of reading and writing need to be raised to fulfil the increasingly exacting demands made upon them by modern society.

(p. 515)

This report was concerned with literacy, and it did admit that literacy was not increasing, and that among certain categories of young children, eleven years and under, literacy was, in all probability, declining.² Literacy means more than an ability to read, it is an ability to comprehend that which is read. Reading is a thinking process, more than just an exercise in identifying shapes, and it requires that a diet be available that will provide nutritional value.

The Commission of Inquiry which produced A Language for Life made use of a report by F. Whitehead et al done for the Schools Council on the subject of children's reading interests.³ White head, in turn, duplicated an earlier study by A. Jenkinson, from the 1930's, in order to indicate development of reading taste over time. As both of these studies concerned a preference in reading rather than research into an ability to read, a brief summation is pertinent here.

In 1938, A. J. Jenkinson conducted a leisure time reading survey among 3,000 adolescents, aged 12 to 16, in urban schools of east central England.⁴ He included only students who were in 'A' (good) streams in the schools, and who were presumed therefore to read well and to have literary tastes. This was done to forestall the charge of

having examined the literary taste of the non-literary. Contemporary research would be concerned with the aspect of the non-literary taste and its effect in the classroom today. Teachers in English literature classrooms of the 60's and 70's have had to cope with increased numbers of disinterested students who have had their formal education requirements deliberately lengthened from pre-war times. Jenkinson, in those pre-war days, found that boys and girls read novels for adults. His list of titles that the youngsters contributed as remembered reading over the past month is quite astonishing. The volunteered reading is very like a list published in America by the National Council of Teachers of English as recommended preparation for college entrance in the humanities. These children did have time to think about the list which they submitted to their teachers, and so, there may have been an inclination to put acceptable choices as well as other choices. Defoe, Dickens, R. L. Stevenson, Charlotte Bronte, and Thomas Hughes were authors that children indicated as top favourites with Sir Walter Scott, John Buchan, H. Rider Haggard, Chesterton, Edgar Allan Poe and H. G. Wells also being named. The girls indicated a greater range of both author and reading material than did the boys. The girls put Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front and T. E. Lawrence's Seven Pillars of Wisdom alongside childhood books such as Grahame's Wind in the Willows. Kingsley's

Water Babies and Anna Sewell's Black Beauty. Girls were also tending to hold on to their childhood longer than boys. The girls included the occasional fairy tale; Ruskin's King of the Golden River was mentioned as was Kipling's Jungle Books.

The reading of these children would not appear to be a cause for concern. Yet there was concern, particularly with respect to adolescent boys, on the part of teachers and parents that cinema-going and the reading of much worthless trash was nurse to future worthlessness and irresponsibility. The interest of boys in reading mysteries, cheap thrillers and stories with aggressive action was noted. The specific worthless trash referred to was 'bloods' or comic papers. The derivation of the British term 'bloods' is clear when it is recognized that these were the story papers or magazines published for boys containing swash-buckling adventure and ghastly tales -- in short, an ample supply of blood, guts and gore. These magazines run the gamut from Boy's Own Paper through the prototypes of the comics which caused such consternation in the 1950's on both sides of the Atlantic. 'Bloods' were also read by girls, but girls exhibited less avid interest. Girls preferred magazines published for them which stressed the domestic, romantic or school story in which violence and direct aggressive action plays a much smaller role. The

boys reported as most popular those magazines in which most violence occurred, (Comic Cuts, Magnet, Wizard). Less popular were those papers (Boy's Own Paper, Scout, Rainbow) considered by adults to combine the violent action with redeeming factors of independence, courage, patriotism, etc. The similar appetite for violence satisfied in a more palatable way.

As for the effects of cinema-going, Jenkinson found that the cinema was the most accessible cultural product and a strong interest for children. A third of the sample went once a week, but the study could derive no firm indications of a connection between reading and theatre attendance. These children did not indicate that movies increased or decreased their reading habit. It seemed to Jenkinson on the basis of his data that good readers read everything from 'bloods' through more standard literature while poor readers tended only to read comic magazines, but to a lesser degree than did avid readers. His conclusions foreshadowed what more rigorous statistical analysis of post-war years was to determine about consumption of media generally and about reading habits in particular. Jenkinson's study was done at a time when there was also widespread interest in researching the reading habits of children and adults in the United States. Similar conclusions were being drawn in the States.

Since the 1930's, there have been several additional factors to influence children's reading habits. Certain social and cultural habits are thought likely to diminish reading as a recreational pursuit. The increased affluence and mobility of many families meant that recreational interests more expensive than reading could be pursued. The advent of television has been the single most significant factor, and it has increased the effect of film on the habit of reading. In mitigation of these factors, there has been the increased amount of publishing specifically for children and juveniles. The paperback revolution occurred in the 1950's, and made both adult and juvenile titles readily available in a mass market. Public libraries grew, and, significantly for children, there was the provision of school libraries. These libraries not only support the curriculum but also provide a wide range of recreational reading.

Jenkinson's study was repeated on a broader base and a wider scale by F. Whitehead et al in Children's Reading Interests, 1975. This team sent a questionnaire to 7800 children in the age range of ten to 15. The survey concluded that children were reading fewer books in the 70's than they had read in the late 30's. Jenkinson had found that his respondents, achieving students, read between four and six books a month, but the 1975 survey found children,

representative students, reading only about three books a month. This diminished figure of book reading corresponds with the findings of Hilde Himmelweit in the mid-fifties, one of the seminal early studies about the effect of television on reading.⁵

Whitehead's team found that fewer adult titles involving long narrative were reported, and that the junior novel or the reading of titles in series had emerged. Old favourites such as Black Beauty, Treasure Island, Little Women, Robinson Crusoe or The Wind in the Willows occurred as did a number of titles designated as juvenile non-quality narratives. The non-quality author most often mentioned was Enid Blyton, a British author who produced over 200 titles on the artistic level of The Bobbsey Twins. Authors who write for the adult market were consumed by interested youngsters. Alistair MacLean, Ian Fleming and Alfred Hitchcock are represented as favourite authors and were listed by the investigators as producing non-quality reading. Non-quality was the designation given to Sex and Savagery of Hell's Angels by Jan Hudson and Skinhead by Richard Allen; both books named as popular reading by teens in the mid-1970's.

While the frequency of book reading has declined, comic book reading apparently has not. The greatest proportion of magazine reading is the reading of comics. This popular

reading habit includes, for girls, an extension into pop music and romance magazines. The report concludes that while most children between the ages of 10 and 15 regularly read a number of comics, and many read some books, there is a sizeable minority of both sexes who do not read any books in their leisure time. This minority increases with age until at age 14 and over, nearly a third of the girls and 40% of the boys are not interested in reading.

Canadian experience bears out the reading patterns uncovered in both American and British studies. L. F. Ashley, in Children's Reading and the 1970's discusses the result of a questionnaire circulated to 1500 children, grades four to seven in Vancouver and its environs.⁶ Twenty per cent of the sample gave mysteries and adventure stories as preferred choices for kinds of reading in leisure time. Other choices were ghost tales, comics, horse and animal stories, followed by the Nancy Drew books for girls and The Hardy Boys series for boys. Science fiction, humour and joke books were also liked. Boys demonstrated the greatest interest in any mention of sports books. Boys were also interested in adventure, mysteries, thrillers, ghost stories and war books. The Hardy Boys, intrepid sleuths, are generally involved in solving some mystery in a fast-paced plot. The counterpart for girls, Nancy Drew, is a more genteel but equally intrepid problem solver.

Nancy unravels legal problems with more inspiration than her lawyer-father. The occasional kidnapping or struggle to which either Nancy or a Hardy boy is more than equal is the level of violence. Girls are attracted to adventure stories, and read ghost stories or mysteries on a par with boys. Their interest in comics declines with age, and girls are not as interested in humour or joke books. Girls substitute stories about animals, an interest in fairy tales, myths or legends, and as they reach the pre-teen years an interest in romance or pop stars. The top fifty most remembered books were listed, these titles were choices given more than twice. Twenty-three of these choices were series, Hardy Boys, Nancy Drew, Cherry Ames, Trixie Belden and The Power Boys and so on. Few classics of children's literature, such as Tom Sawyer, Little Women and Black Beauty, were named. Jack London's Call of the Wild and Stevenson's Treasure Island are perennial choices. The children also made mention of the following items as favourite reading, 'James Bond', The Dirty Dozen, 'Batman' and 'Crazy Horse'. Children in the grades six and seven reported remembering best Mutiny on the Bounty, The Rise and Fall of Adolf Hitler, Sand Pebbles, Sink the Bismarck, Michener's Hawaii, Life of Hitler, Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, Hell's Angels, Lord of the Flies and H. Rider Haggard's She.

There was little congruence with either British or American listings from pre-war research on reading. The interest in adult titles is apparent, and there is a diminishing interest in children's literature per se. Terman and Lima in Children's Reading, an American study from the 1930's had produced a list of much more standard children's fare, cited by the children as their reading.⁷ From comparisons, it may be clearly seen that 1930 favourites (all standard classics) had lost ground in readership, and only four titles maintained a consistency of popularity. These were Tom Sawyer, Black Beauty, Swiss Family Robinson and The Jungle Book, although none were in the top ten favourites in Ashley's 1970 study. Seven young girls read and remembered warmly Little Women, but one little girl voted Jacqueline Susann's Valley of the Dolls, an adult best-seller of the 60's, as a memorable book from childhood. It is truly sad that a little girl has had so small an experience of literature that she thinks of this book as memorable.

It is highly unlikely that the child borrowed this book, Valley of the Dolls, from the children's department of a public library or from a school library. The title, which caused a minor censorship flurry at the time of publication, received a full share of promotional advertising. It was made into a film, and was widely available in paperback

and book club distribution. The point is, that with less than adequate guidance, a child may have read widely, and may have never read a significant book.⁸

This statement is also supported in part by a Children's Services Study done for the Regina Public Library in 1976 on the reading and television viewing habits of children.⁹ A sample of Regina's school children were queried on their recreational and informational needs. The children, 540 in all, between the ages of 6 and 13, were each interviewed by members of a research team. The children were not asked to name specific books, although they sometimes did, rather they were asked "What kinds of books do you read most often?" The children answered a fiction choice four times more often than a non-fiction choice. Thirteen per cent of the sample, 122 of the 540 children, responded immediately that their favourite reading was comics or humour magazines. Another thirteen per cent responded that they preferred mysteries. The only category larger than mysteries or comics was an answer that was unspecified as to type, (fiction/non-fiction) for example, "any stories about animals" or "stories about people, romance" etc. Following comics, humour or joke magazines, and mysteries, children named adventure stories, westerns, horror and monster tales, and series books as favourite reading.

There are statistically significant sex-linked characteristics in reading which determine choices between fiction and non-fiction (girls read more fiction than do boys), and among the genres in fiction. Both sexes liked comic and horror tales. Girls however showed more interest in mysteries and in mythology or fairy tale than did boys. Boys were more interested in adventure stories, including police dramas and westerns, and in science fiction. Series books, once again Nancy Drew and The Hardy Boys, were chosen as favourites by both sexes. A favourite author that was mentioned was Alfred Hitchcock, a syndicated authorship that produces a popular The Three Investigators series for juveniles as well as producing mysteries for adults. Another favourite author was Judy Blume who writes junior novels for girls.¹⁰

Asked about magazine reading, which was less frequent than book reading, it was noticeable that absent from general cognizance were the magazines specifically published for children and juveniles. The most popular magazine read in Regina was The Canadian which accompanies the Saturday edition of the newspaper, The Leader-Post. Some girls mentioned Miss Chatelaine, more simply read Chatelaine. Boys named the occasional sports magazine. Children's interest in newspapers, like their interest in magazines, was low. Their newspaper reading most frequently reflected an interest in the comics and the television guide.

The children surveyed in Regina, and in the Borough of York, Metropolitan Toronto, where this survey was pretested, were watching a lot of television. They equalled and exceeded the provincial averages of 12 hours per week found for young children in a research study produced for the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media.¹¹ Thirty-three per cent of the sample reported that they watched television often, defined as three to five shows a day while another forty-five per cent reported watching television always, defined as more than five shows a day. Estimating conservatively that a show lasts a half hour, Regina's children are watching television from 10½ to 12½ hours weekly. Judging from the number of hour, and longer, shows named as favourite watching, it would seem that this estimate is indeed conservative. The television that children watched was not educational, but was adult programming in evening hours, or cartoons and game shows shown at convenient hours for children to watch. 'The Flintstones' was on at lunch-time, and game shows were on at the supper hour. The amount of viewing done does suggest that television is replacing books in the lives of some children.

However, evidence about books and television is much more complicated than an either/or situation. In 1974, Communications in Ontario, a survey of public attitudes documented the uneasiness that parents felt in relation to

television and learning.¹² While adults may feel that film is an excellent teacher, particularly for young children, it was suggested that "the educational efficacy of television diminishes over time. Television may foster laziness and impede a child's development of basic learning and reading skills."¹³ Parents thought that children became engrossed in viewing to the detriment of other activities, of which reading is one. It was concluded that books were unimportant to the 11 to 13 year old children interviewed in this Ontario survey.

As children approach the teen years, there is a diminution of the interest in reading. More boys than girls are likely to leave reading entirely. The pre-teen years are also the years for peak television watching. Television plays an ambiguous role in relation to reading. It can displace reading, or some activity, for some children just as almost any other activity can displace reading. Television can also promote reading. The children in the Regina survey were asked if they had ever read a book because of a program on television.¹⁴ Overwhelmingly, the response was "Yes!" A goodly number of children volunteered the particular title that television had introduced. Many of the titles were books for adults, The Day of the Jackal, Airport, Jaws, The Towering Inferno. Others were television spinoffs from favourite shows such as 'Six Million Dollar Man', 'Star Trek', 'The Flintstones', 'The Partridge Family', 'Planet of the Apes' and 'Charlie Brown' comics. Television was also responsible for an interest in

Laura Wilder's Little House on the Prairie series, Island of the Blue Dolphins, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Swiss Family Robinson, Anne of Green Gables, Oliver Twist, and in animal stories, Lassie and Black Beauty.

Harkening back to the Thirties, and the pre-television era, it was noted that children who read many books also read many comics. For the Seventies, it may be added that these children also apparently watch much television. Children who use one medium extensively are likely to consume all media in quantity.

Perhaps because of mass media including promotional advertising, as well as the pervasive presence of television and the paperback revolution, a gap--if ever one did exist--between adult and children's reading tastes has narrowed. The interest in reading peaks at about age ten, in grades five or so. Thereafter, the child's interest in reading may be diverted into other activities, or the child's preference in reading tends to become concentrated. As they approach the teen years, children are less willing to experiment in reading widely. They rapidly move from reading the literature written especially for their level into the equivalent literature written for adults. The pursuit of mediocre reading at a child's level becomes the pursuit of mediocre reading at an adult's level.

Mills and Boon, the sister company to Harlequin Books in Canada, who publish a romantic series for women have

reported that their average age of readership is becoming younger.¹⁵ The company has done two surveys on readership, in 1968 and in 1974. Reporting an overall steady upswing of sales, the company notes that the greatest increase in readership is among women, ages 19 to 24. Public libraries report the many requests that they have had for these novels, published at the rate of eight a month. Young girls, about age 15, are requesting these romances which are harmless in the sense that they do not promote violence, pornography or sexual obscenity.

Boys, to a much greater extent than girls, begin to read the books that do contain violence, or sadistic and pornographic elements. Such 'mature' material is widely available, and the question is raised as to whether these mature elements produce trauma in certain children by disturbing a process of social and emotional maturation. Pamela Hansford Johnson in considering the effect of the books owned and read by the young murderers in the British "Moors Murders" case of the 1960's, asserts that a deleterious effect is amply demonstrated.¹⁶ She agreed with the principles of censorship advocated in the report of the Longford Committee Investigating Pornography, London, 1972.¹⁷ The report of the Earl of Longford's committee was controversial. It followed the equally controversial Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography in the United States, 1970.¹⁸ The presence of violence in the mass

media (as violence related to pornography and obscenity) was the text of these reports. The issue of censorship which such reports raise, and the application of censorship to the media consumption of juveniles is not however, the direct concern of this paper on the reading habits of young persons and the violent content of their literature.

Children and adolescents do read material that is violent, and their vulnerability in reading material that is labelled 'for mature readers' is worthy of consideration. The material that children read is both the literature for children and the literature for adults. Children quickly learn to read the mediocre fare. Children begin their reading habit by hearing and following nursery tales. They then turn to the fairy and folk tale and simple stories written especially for them. As they begin to read independently, they choose comic books or materials promoted through the mass appeal of movies, television, advertisement and the print industry. They would appear to miss much of the quality literature that is written for children in their race to read either the high or low quality literature written for adults.

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A questionnaire circulated to students in grades 7 to 13 revealed that teenagers found mysteries most interesting, followed by adventure, humour, magazines and science fiction. Girls liked romances, boys liked sports stories. About 60% of the respondents identified a favourite author, many of the names American. Judy Blume was identified as a favourite author, while Farley Mowat was identified as both Canadian and a favourite author, other Canadian authors fared less well in terms of being identified as Canadian.

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CHILDREN'S IMAGINATION AND FOLKLORE

Do children learn violence from their literature and their exposure to the other mass media, or does children's literature and the other media merely reflect the violence that children already feel? Violence and aggressive impulses are part of a child's emotional growth. Child psychology asserts that the basic conflict of preadolescent years centres on socialization into a community, and on aggression versus submission. Children have to conform to social restraints without sacrificing a self concept based on a sense of individuality and independence.

The role of literature in arousing violence in children is not easily ascertainable. It would appear that children meet violence in their thoughts and in their fantasies and environment to a much greater degree than is generally realized. Violence becomes a pattern of thought early in life.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation produced a series on "Images of Childhood" in which young children were asked, for one of the segments, to tell about their fantasies.¹ The children defined imagination and its uses, and then revealed their daydreams and their dreams while sleeping. Their daydreams were of material success. The images that occurred in their fantasies during sleep were of violence. A little girl dreamed of being chased by a witch. An older

boy dreamed of being Superman, trapped and about to lose his power. In most of the fantasies, children cast themselves as victims. They were chased by lions and monsters, tossed to alligators, "zapped into a mountain", about to be eaten or about to be killed, when they awoke in fright or were rescued. With the youngest children, mothers were identified as the effective adult who did the rescuing.

Books and comic books contributed to the fantasies as much as did any other medium. Horror stories, movies and police dramas were mentioned, and, clearly, ideas about frightening situations were derived from external sources. Still, reactions to the stimulus of books and film is highly individual. A boy mentioned watching a golf tournament on television, and then dreaming that he was an ant in a sand trap with a golf ball hurtling toward him. So, the human being is quite capable of manufacturing his own horror independent of external stimulus. When these children did mention sources for their fantasies, the sources were frequently 'Dracula' movies or horror tales. The kind of mediocre drama that they themselves identify as popular reading and viewing material.

Monster stories, books of 'sick' jokes and humorous books were chosen as favourite reading by a large number of boys in a study (1976) of the reading interests of young children in Regina.² Girls were not as interested in

these books. The sex difference here reflects the orientation of boys to literature containing violence as comedy. The practical joke, violence as wit, humour, ridicule is a classic mode for expressing aggression. Boys, more than girls, are expected to be aggressive. Coming to grips with assertion and aggression through finding acceptable expressions for either is a difficulty for human beings. Often it is asserted that a vicarious experience through literature enables children to release their emotional tension and to express their violence in an acceptable form. Anthony Pietropinto, a psychiatrist, believes this and defends nonsense literature and its variants on this ground of vicarious expression.³

Nonsense humour consists chiefly of short poems or limericks that relate in a whimsical way, odd or grotesque themes. The nonsense relies on verbal play, puns, gibes or clever gibberish. Pietropinto quotes some of the violent nonsense that appeals to adolescents:

Willie, with a thirst for gore
 Nailed the baby to the door,
 Mother said, with humour quaint,
 "Willie, dear, don't mar the paint."

Willie poisoned Auntie's tea,
 Auntie died in agony,
 Uncle came and looked quite vexed
 "Really, Will," said he, "What next?"

Then the rhymes, from Willie who is perpetrator of these nasty tricks to Gentle Jane who is usually on the receiving end:

Gentle Jane once chanced to sit,
Where some rifle bullets hit
Though she had no bumps or sprains,
Gentle Jane felt shooting pains.

A Toronto high school, Parkdale Collegiate, in the Spring 1977 newsletter for students printed the following student submission as a limerick of the times:

A parachute jumper named Trotter
Was so drunk that he started to totter
When he leaped in the sky
Pulled the zip--on his fly!
And they picked Trotter up with a blotter.

Examples can be multiplied. The verses are relished because of the incongruous reaction following upon an act of violence. The horror aroused by the accused axe murderess, Lizzie Borden, was immediately converted into a street jingle:

Lizzie Borden took an axe,
And gave her father forty whacks,
When she saw what she had done,
She gave her mother forty-one!

These verses are like the ghoulish rhymes repeated by children to each other, preferably sitting, huddled together in the dark. The object of ghost story sessions is to frighten, and several verses or tales culminate in the teller suddenly screaming or grabbing the listener. The Opies in The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren record a number of spooky rhymes

circulating among British schoolchildren in the 1950's.⁴

Dialect or accent rather than content identify these verses as British, many Canadian children would recognize the doggerel about the woman who:

... in a churchyard sat, oo-oooh
 Very short and very fat, oo-oooh
 She saw three corpses carried in, oo-oooh
 Very tall and very thin, oo-oooh

Woman to the corpses said, oo-oooh
 Shall I be like you when I'm dead? oo-oooh
 Corpses to the woman said oo-oooh
 Yes, you'll be like us when you're dead, oo-oooh
 Woman to the corpses said ...
 (scream, grab listener)

Ghost, horror and monster stories are like the nonsense verses, because these tales also frequently contain incongruous and gruesome elements. Therefore, they too may perform the same function in resolving fears and conflicts, by projecting them in an expression that may be confronted and controlled. The fact that boys particularly like these kinds of tales in their reading may, once again, reflect the problem of masculine socialization in this area of aggression control. Children who read this literature of gruesome nonsense and horrible tale learn that adults have felt the rebellious, totally destructive tendencies that dwell in both the conscious and subconscious mind of children. The literature helps children to recognize that with maturity, there will be an alleviation and, hopefully, a control over such feelings. It is, as C. S. Lewis has suggested, that the great gift and comfort of literature is that therein we meet someone who is exactly like ourselves.

The stories that children perpetuate among themselves are not literature in an artistic sense, rather they are folklore. Children's folklore frequently tends to be violent. The lore seems quite calculated to induce those very nightmares that children were recounting for the C.B.C. interview. Some of the stories Canadian children tell are recorded in Edith Fowke's compilation, Folklore of Canada and reprinted here:⁵

THE CADAVER'S ARM

Told by Brian Smith, 14, Willowdale, 1973.

There was this laboratory with ten scientists in it. All of them worked very hard at their work, but one girl especially worked hard. She never took time out for fun, always just working on science, science, science.

Well one day the other nine scientists decided that they were going to play a joke on her. They strung up an arm (a human arm) that was a specimen at the laboratory, in her bedroom while she was out. When she came home that night, the other nine were in a room next door to hers and listening. All of a sudden they heard a scream and they all chuckled to themselves. But then there was a strange silence and they decided to check in on her. They found her in the bathroom eating the arm: she had gone completely insane!

(Brian heard this from John Briggs, a friend, who said the story was true.)

GIRLFRIEND'S LEGS CUT OFF

Told by Carolynne Parker, 14, Toronto, 1973.

Two girls were staying overnight at a friend's house and the one decided to go down and get a glass of milk before bed. A while later the girl who was still in bed heard a thumping at the bottom of the steps. She looked down and there was her girlfriend and someone had cut off her legs.

HUMANS CAN LICK HANDS TOO!

Told by Diana Booth, 16, Toronto, 1973.

There was a girl who had this dog. In her house when she went to bed the dog slept beside her on the carpet. In the middle of the night if she ever heard anything or was wondering if everything was all right she would put her hand down and the dog would lick her hand.

So one night she heard a noise and she put her hand down and the dog licked her hand. Then in the morning she went to the washroom and saw the dog with his throat slit open and written on the wall in blood was: HUMANS CAN LICK HANDS TOO!

The stories may contain factual or literary inconsistencies, but that hardly matters when the objective is to entertain by frightening. It is noticeable that many of the elements in these stories parallel elements in folk and fairy tales. Death, mutilation and cannibalism are common motifs.

Variants of "The Golden Arm" and "The Corpse's Liver" are told by Toronto schoolchildren, indeed, probably by schoolchildren the English-speaking world over. "The Golden Arm" is recorded by Joseph Jacobs in his collection of English Fairy Tales.⁶ In the published version, a man married a woman, young and fair with a golden arm. The couple was happy, though, truth to tell, the man loved the golden arm more than he loved his wife. When his wife died, the man put on deepest black and a great show of mourning. But, for all that, he got up in the middle of the night, dug up the body, cut off the golden arm, and carried it home. At night, he put the arm under his pillow, and as he

was about to sleep, the ghost of his wife appeared. Pretending not to be afraid, he asked:

"What hast thou done with thy cheeks
so red?"
"All withered and wasted away",
replied the ghost in a hollow voice.

The litany continues in question and answer, until the final question, which is answered with a shout and snatch:

"What hast thou done with thy
golden arm?"
"THOU HAST IT!"

The version collected from a Toronto teenager is recounted in Folklore in Canada.⁷ The teenager's version is less poetic in rendition than Jacobs' and is much shorter in the telling. It is told as an anecdote, and concludes with the arm strangling the man.

Jacobs' note on the origin of "The Golden Arm" mentions the obvious similarity in tales about golden legs. Jacobs also notes the parallel structure in a tale collected by the Grimm brothers in which an innkeeper's wife used the liver of a man hanging on a gallows for a meal. When the ghost visits her, she asks what has become of his hair, his eyes and so on, concluding with the query about his liver. At that point the ghost, (the story-teller), leaps forward with the shout, "THOU HAST DEVoured IT!"

"The Corpse's Liver" (often, purportedly a true tale according to the teller) is still circulating among Toronto teens.⁸ The modern version is some variant on the boy sent to the store for meat, but who squanders the money and stops by the graveyard on his way back home to dig up the liver of a corpse. Frequently it is the liver of a recently deceased relative, a grandparent or uncle or aunt. The liver is very much enjoyed by the family. (This again is a familiar motif from folklore; the eating of one's own family is particularly tasty.) At night, the corpse returns to claim his liver, repeating "I want my liver" as he crosses the street, enters the house, climbs the stairs, nears the bed and grabs the boy! Jacobs on "The Corpse's Liver" and "The Golden Arm" says, "It is doubtful how far such gruesome topics should be introduced into a book for children, but ... pity and terror among the little ones is as effective as among the spectators of a (Greek) drama, and they take the same kind of thrill from such stories. They know it is all make believe just as much as the spectators of a tragedy. Every one who has enjoyed the blessing of a romantic imagination has been trained up on such tales of wonder."⁹ Children are indeed trained on tales, some of wonder, some of less admirable qualities. The folklore and imaginings of children are replete with violent images. Gruesome lore and language is a major interest of childhood.

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MOTHER GOOSE

The first stories and rhymes that children hear are from the world of Mother Goose. A world that nursery rhyme reformers claim has much violence--too much for introduction into a child's nursery.¹ The claim has some validity. However, the violence is only a part of the total contribution of Mother Goose to the development of children. The violence is a small part which resists being expunged. Possibly because the expression of the violent acts is intimately bound with the traditional recitation and historical roots of Mother Goose.

The name Mother Goose originated in seventeenth century France, and was popularized by Charles Perrault. His Les Contes de la Mère l'Oye (1697) was a collection of fairy tales rather than the verses that characterize a Mother Goose today. A Mother Goose, meaning a collection of tales, was published in London in 1729. Many of the verses that presently constitute a Mother Goose, in the sense of a collection of nursery rhymes, have a provenance in street handbills printed as early as the 1620's in England.

In Boston, in 1719, the name Mother Goose was used in a reputed work, Songs for the Nursery or Mother Goose's Melodies. No copy of this work is known to exist; its biblio-

graphic mystery is part of the evidence for claiming the actual Mother Goose as a Boston matriarch long buried in the Old Granary Burying Ground, Boston. It is certain that a Mother Goose book is most often used as the North American term for any collection of nursery rhymes and riddles, games, lullabies, stories, songs and snatches.

Whether North American or British in origin, the contents of these nursery rhymes are similar. A Mother Goose book can contain as many or as few verses as the publisher wishes. The true nursery rhyme is anonymous. Many verses are doggerel, but many are the works of known authors, like the limericks of Edward Lear, the conundrums of Lewis Carroll, the verses of Walter de la Mare and so on. Some verses are standards without which even the cheapest, most poorly produced cardboard book could not be a proper Mother Goose. Curiously enough the best-known, most-recited poems also contain the oft-deplored elements of violence. Consider Jack who fell and broke his crown, and Jill came tumbling after. Then there is Humpty Dumpty who suffered such an irreparable fall!² What about pussy, flung down the well, or the three blind mice pursued by a knife-wielding farmer's wife? What English-speaking child has not been lulled in babyhood by the verses of "Rock a bye baby"? In the first examples given of Jack and Jill or Humpty Dumpty, the violence is physical and accidental. The violence is

physical and purposeful in the cruel treatment of mice and cats. In "Rock a bye baby" an overtone of psychological abuse is added to the physical violence. The violence is directed toward the child.³ This universal lullaby contains two threats, falling and noise, devastating to the infant.

Behavioural psychology states that infants innately show fear when a loud noise suddenly occurs in their vicinity, when there is a loss of physical support accompanied by falling sensation, when pain is experienced and when a sudden movement is made by others as the child is falling asleep.⁴ In this lullaby the baby is threatened by being told that he will be put high on a tree-top where, when the wind blows, his cradle will rock. Mother may even be rocking the child as she unfolds this vignette. When (not even the saving grace of an if) the bough breaks--terrifying crack and jolt--the cradle will fall, down will come baby, bough, cradle and all.⁵ The fall is like Humpty Dumpty's--irreparable, totally damaging. What a very good thing it is that baby has no understanding of the words being crooned at him! This lack of language may be a salvation although the illustrations, whether in cheap or quality edition, usually clarify the situation. Baby has been shown, mouth open in surprise, being tumbled from his perch. One modern edition, Lavender's Blue (Oxford, 1954) shows Baby secure in a sturdy wooden cradle being carried back aloft by four

angels round the posters of the crib. As any well-versed child knows these may be the four angels of bedtime prayer, "one to sing, one to pray and two to carry my soul away". There is a finality of death about some of these verses and their illustrations, but it is highly unlikely that the image of death is apparent to the children. Death is something that does interest children greatly as they move through the years from toddler to young adult. But as children have little or no concept of mortality, particularly their own, the image is something to be curious about rather than something to be feared.

It should be remembered that death was more domestic in the society of Mother Goose. The mention of death is taken as one with the fanciful characters and the curious world of nursery rhyme that children love. Any educator or parent interested in introducing children to language and literature would insist that every child deserves to own a better edition of Mother Goose than the paperback economy variety. Mother Goose contains verses for the child to enjoy and for the sociologist, psychologist and literary critic to ponder.

Violence is one of the leitmotifs that can be explored. Violence and cruelty have been grounds for criticism. In the 1950's Geoffrey Handley-Taylor issued a

short bibliography of nursery rhyme reform in which he wrote a brief analysis of nursery rhyme claiming that:⁶

The average collection of 200 traditional nursery rhymes contains approximately 100 rhymes which personify all that is glorious and ideal for the child. Unfortunately, the remaining 100 rhymes harbor unsavory elements. The incidents listed below occur in the average collection and may be accepted as a reasonably conservative estimate based on a general survey of this type of literature.

- 8 allusions to murder (unclassified)
- 2 cases of choking to death
- 1 case of death by devouring
- 1 case of cutting a human being in half
- 1 case of decapitation
- 1 case of death by squeezing
- 1 case of death by shrivelling
- 1 case of death by starvation
- 1 case of boiling to death
- 1 case of death by drowning
- 4 cases of killing domestic animals
- 1 case of body-snatching
- 21 cases of death (unclassified)
- 7 cases relating to the severing of limbs
- 1 allusion to a bleeding heart
- 1 case of devouring human flesh
- 5 threats of death
- 1 case of kidnapping
- 12 cases of torment and cruelty to human beings and animals
- 8 cases of whipping and lashing
- 3 allusions to blood
- 14 cases of stealing and general dishonesty
- 15 allusions to maimed human beings and animals
- 1 allusion to undertakers
- 2 allusions to graves
- 23 cases of physical violence (unclassified)
- 1 case of lunacy
- 16 allusions to misery and sorrow
- 1 case of drunkenness
- 4 cases of cursing
- 1 allusion to marriage as a form of death
- 1 case of scorning the blind
- 1 case of scorning prayer
- 9 cases of children being lost or abandoned

2 cases of house burning
 9 allusions to poverty and want
 5 allusions to quarrelling
 2 cases of unlawful imprisonment
 2 cases of racial discrimination

Expressions of fear, weeping, moans of
 anguish, biting, pain and evidence of
 supreme selfishness may be found in
 almost every other page.

If Mother Goose is paralleled to the corpus of fairy and
 folk tales with which she shares an inheritance, the incidence
 of quarrelling, cursing, boiling, devouring of flesh and
 cracking of limbs would seem conservative rather than excessive.

A comparison of good quality popular editions of
 Mother Goose would bear the listing out, depending upon the
 number of rhymes included. Two that have approximately 400
 rhymes are Raymond Briggs' Treasury of Mother Goose Rhymes
 (Coward-McCann, 1966) and Marguerite de Angeli's Book of
Nursery & Mother Goose Rhymes (Doubleday, 1954). These books
 offer an artistic contrast. The Briggs book, together with
 its companion volume The Fairy Tale Treasury (Hamish Hamilton,
 1972) has all the evidence of violent short tales and verses.
 The artist shows strong line drawings of ugly people and uses
 lots of colour to enliven the text. De Angeli's approach is
 to diminish the excitement and the action of the fewer violent
 tales that are included by presenting more domestic scenes
 peopled by dainty children and jovial adults. Her palette is

pastel and the illustration is muted, in the style of Kate Greenaway generations earlier. Although both books contain approximately the same number of rhymes, Briggs includes the story of Giant Bonaparte who eats naughty children but de Angeli does not. In Briggs' illustration accompanying the verse about Bonaparte, a robust little boy appears to be ably thumbing his nose at the towering giant. On the basis of glancing through these editions, an adult might well select the Briggs book for a boy and the softer more feminine de Angeli book for a little girl. Thus an initial choice of books may begin the process of educating boys to a stereotype of bracing aggressive temperament and girls to the stereotype of gentler disposition.

Brian Wildsmith's Mother Goose (Oxford, 1964) is bright and colourful, and might be selected for its appeal to the young child regardless of sex. It is much less violent both in content and in illustration than Brigg's book but it only contains a hundred or so verses. Like Lavender's Blue: A Book of Nursery Rhymes (Oxford, 1954) again with muted drawings and pastel shades, these shorter versions of Mother Goose, having 100 to 200 verses, do not meet the criteria of deplorable incident described by Handley-Taylor in his plea for nursery rhyme reform. His listing however does have an impact on calling attention to the sordid side of Mother Goose.

The reasons for this sordidness and violence are varied. First, and obviously, incidents occur because some rhymes were not written for children's consumption per se. They were the doggerel of the streets of times from the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. In their way nursery rhymes are social history and if lunatics, scorned cripples, maimed animals and so on appear in the verses it is because the verses reflect their times.

The cases of injuring or killing domestic animals are cited as unsavoury elements. The hunting of animals and killing of domestic livestock is a fact of life. Few people in an agrarian economy, such as Mother Goose's society, or for that matter, twentieth century rural Ontario take a sentimental view of animals. Even the life of human beings was held as more dispensable in times past.⁷ Disability, whether from accident or illness, was perhaps more visible in the daily life of Mother Goose's world. Death occurred in the home rather than in the hospital or institution as it tends to occur today. The fate of animals in Mother Goose is hardly unsavoury compared to the actual fates of many humans, particularly defenceless children in the middle ages. The History of Childhood (Psychohistory Press, 1974) edited by Lloyd De Meuse begins with the assertion that "The history of childhood is a nightmare from which we have only recently begun to awaken. The further back in history one goes the lower the level of

child care, and the more likely children are to be killed, abandoned, beaten, terrorized and sexually abused." This pattern of life is reflected in Mother Goose. It has even been suggested that simple counting out rhymes to identify who shall be 'it' were a Druidic formula for determining a human sacrifice. The hypothesis, like many of the tales associated with the Druids, is tenuous. "London Bridge is falling down", a nursery game that entraps someone at the end of a sequence may echo the historical evidence of immuring someone, usually a young child or adolescent, in the foundation of a bridge.

In any of the standard editions of nursery rhymes available today there is a mixture of cruelty and kindness both to humans and to animals. Children like animals, and so animals are a prominent feature of nursery rhymes. Animals are frequently personified and shown to control their situations. They exhibit very human virtues and faults.

It was, after all, Goosey Goosey Gander who threw the old man down the stairs for not saying his prayers.⁸ Mary's little lamb loved Mary and followed her to school because, as teacher explains to the other children, Mary loves the little lamb and, by inference, treats the lamb with kindness. The pony, Dapple-Grey, was lent to a lady who mistreated him and whose owner declares:

I would not lend my pony now
For all that lady's hire.

Against the pussy put down the well, there is the admonition to "love little pussy" and "not pull her tail, nor drive her away." It is naughty boys who try to drown poor pussy cats; who come with bow and arrow determined to shoot a little sparrow.

"Oh no" said the sparrow
 "I won't make a stew!"
 So he flapped his wings
 And away he flew.

There is an ethic operating in Mother Goose that instructs children to be religious, to be kind to animals and to be clean, careful and obedient. Bad kittens lose their mittens and get no pie but good kittens find their mittens and even wash them after eating their piece of pie.

Hence some of the violence is within the context of learning. Dire consequences are shown as following upon a certain course of action. Three children sliding on ice on a river fell in and were drowned. Had these children, so the rhyme tells, slid on dry ground or better yet stayed safe at home, they would not be drowned. This is the Awful Warning school of literature; only incidentally exemplified by Mother Goose. There are other more blatant examples in longer stories written expressly for children, and in the religious or moral verses intended for children's edification. A good example of these verses is provided by a digression into Isaac Watts' Divine and Moral Songs Attempted in Easy Language for the Use of Children first published in 1715

and steadily rising to peak of popularity in the 1850's.⁹ Isaac Watts (1674-1748) an English theologian whose hymns are represented in modern hymnals, wrote these songs for children to deliver them from wanton, idle and profane songs. He wanted to entertain them as did the nursery rhymes but also to direct their thoughts heavenward. The songs stand as a "landmark, early but clear, in the intimate family history of the English child."¹⁰ The divine songs set uncomfortable if not impossible standards for children: they spoke of death and the wages of sin. Grounded in the world of religious belief, these songs surely could inflict more agonies of spirit upon the sensitive child than ever did the verses of Mother Goose who lived in the world of make-believe. Children were encouraged to think about the fact that they might die imminently, and be acceptable to a record-keeping God Who with:

One stroke of His Almighty Rod
Shall send young sinners quick to Hell

Many verses told of assured damnation, "dreadful Hell and everlasting pains." God's love and grace could easily turn to God's vengeance:

... all his love to fury turn
And strike me dead upon the place

There was no repentance in the grave, nor pardons for the dead, so children were exhorted to be dutiful and pious while they had the brief breath of life. The Divine Songs were

were always explicit about the danger of delaying personal reform or of the sins of disrespect for parents, jeering, cursing or telling lies:

The Lord delights in them that speak
The words of Truth; but every liar
Must have his portion in the lake
That burns with brimstone and with fire

Then let me always watch my lips
Lest I be struck to Death and Hell
Since God a book of reckoning keeps
For every lie that children tell

Isaac Watts was not all frightening; his book actually exhibited a move toward the beginning of the end of the Puritan persecuting love of children. His truly frightening verse is now forgotten in the evolution of a changing attitude toward childhood, but he still survives in Mother Goose or young children's poetry collections with such verses as:

Let dogs delight to bark and bite
For God has made them so:
Let bears and lions growl and fight,
for 'tis their nature to.

But, children, you should never let
Such angry quarrels arise,
Your little hands were never made
To tear each other's eyes.

The lesson always survives in children's literature; the violence of Awful Warning is less searing in Mother Goose than in much well-intentioned religious or moral literature or in some of the explicitly realistic material presented to young people today.

Violence in Mother Goose can be explained from the context in history, and the violence is perpetuated by the insistence, stemming from oral tradition, on a standard repetition. The nursery rhymes can be used to infer social history and the presence of violence in past times. One example is the phenomenon of child abuse and infanticide that may underlie such rhymes as "Rock a bye Baby."¹¹

It is an accepted psychological fact that through fantasy a human being reveals that which is most important to him. Furthermore, some of the burden of the reality is removed through exercise of the fantasy. Unwanted children have been born to a life of abuse, misery and beating. The matter of child abuse in our present society is a hidden but pervasive and persistent evil.¹² Child abusers vent their spleen in Mother Goose's society. At least one psychologist has asserted that "Rock a bye Baby" allows a parent to express concealed hostility toward a child.¹³ The wish of a mother to be rid of a burdensome child has found its way into cradle song. Has it also found its way into one of the most delightful longer poems of Mother Goose?

Gay go up and gay go down
To ring the bells of London town

This is normally read to children older than infants; it is an introduction to longer poetry requiring sustained listening.

It introduces onomatopoeia, a device used throughout the easy rhyming couplets. The young child may be lulled by the rhythm and have become drowsy and inattentive before the end of this rhyme. When the child droops, the swooping last couplet comes to affright his almost rest:

Here comes a candle to light you to bed
Here comes a chopper to chop off your head!

The thought of infanticide, too unpleasant to acknowledge openly, has been expressed in nursery play. David Bakan on child abuse contends that "Rock a bye Baby" takes an advantage of the fact that the child does not understand the words. The effect is one of cursing a person in an unknown language.¹⁴ The curse releases an emotion or tension without actually harming the person cursed. However, children can still sense the hostility and malevolent intent, and Bakan advances the hypothesis that children erect defensive barriers against too explicit an expression of this intent. One of these barriers is the insistence on stories or rhymes being repeated in the same way at each telling. Children thus refuse to have a situation clarified through the use of alternate wording or explanation. They hold the truth at bay defending themselves by the magic of formula. The hypothesis may hold elements of truth -- young children certainly do prefer their stories recited according to the familiar version.

Psychologists assert that children are reassured by items in ritual and at a certain stage of their life prefer things in ordered patterns. This order may be in the line-up of their toys, or their ritual for going to bed, or their stories. They are creating an order in their world, a necessary step to future psychological development and are not necessarily demonstrating a defence mechanism against projected hostility. Literary historians would suggest that renderings from formula derive from an oral tradition. Children are natural inheritors of the tenets of this tradition, and so prefer their stories told in the same way. A simple explanation may be that children appreciate a pattern in tellings so that they may have the assurance of enjoying the same experience twice.

Returning however to the abuse of children as revealed in Mother Goose, it may be fairly stated that whippings and beatings are frequent occurrences. Sometimes these beatings are intended as lessons, viewed as legitimate punishment:

Tom, Tom the piper's son
 Stole a pig and away did run
 The pig was eat and Tom was beat
 And Tom went crying down the street.

More often the beating is a completely casual occurrence. The old woman who lived in a shoe daily whipped her children soundly. She had so many children, but no old man, and she

lived in a confined space with broth for supper but not bread -- a situation conducive to abuse. As the rhyme says, she didn't know what else to do. Beyond her ability to cope with her domestic situation, she beat her children. A situation as common in the times of Mother Goose as in present society.

Dr. Faustus, the schoolmaster, whipped his pupils through England, France, Spain and back again. One must assume, no other explanation being given, that the pupils were whipped simply because that was normal procedure in schools.¹⁵

Little Polly Flinders was whipped for soiling her nice new clothes. In earlier version of this same verse, Jenny Flinders is whipped for spoiling her clothes. The soiling of nice new clothes, the latter refinement, sees advanced to legitimize the beating, new clothes presumably being more worthy of careful treatment. Does a young child grasp the distinction? Quite probably Polly (or Jenny) sat yesterday among those same ashes without incurring wrath. Today for the same action she has been beaten. It may be that the older version more exactly reveals a truth of childhood, the experience of a sudden inexplicable rage of a parent. An experience common to children who exasperate mothers even though there are no longer many cinders to dirty clothes.

Children often experience vicissitudes of an irrational and violent nature. They accept this allotment. Being defenceless, they have no recourse but to do so. Being innocent, they have no framework for knowing the rational. Their innocence at least functions as a psychological defence against the hostility expressed in some of the words addressed to them. At the same time, this expression of hostility and the depiction of overt violence in nursery rhyme and story informs their innocence. Efforts to change Mother Goose and to reform her cruelties are largely unsuccessful. In New Nursery Rhymes for Old (True Aim, 1950) there is a refurbished "Pussy in the Well" on the grounds that this rhyme was particularly indefensible and encouraged children to drown cats. The new version reads:

Ding dong bell
 Pussy's at the well
 Who took her there?
 Little Johnny Hare.
 Who'll bring her in?
 Little Tommy Thin.
 What a jolly boy was that
 To get some milk for pussy cat
 Who ne'er did any harm
 But played with the mice in
 His father's barn.

Even Pussy is reformed in the last line. However, most children continue to hear the original version with:

Little Johnny Green
 ...
 What a naughty boy was that
 To drown poor pussy cat
 Who ne'er did any harm
 But killed the mice in
 His father's barn.

Mothers recite to children the verses as they recall them from their own nursery days and hence the verses survive. The words are not analyzed, they are simply received as the magical right words from long ago.

Mother Goose does change, but slowly. Items gradually drop because they no longer have a place and have not firmly entrenched themselves in folk tradition. English children were once threatened with Bonaparte. Old Boney was a tall dark man who rode his horse on purpose to snatch naughty children, tear them limb from limb, and gobble them up. Old Boney, or Giant Bonaparte as he is sometimes called, no longer has the same force as a threat in nurseries. Clearly at one time he was an historical threat to Englishmen, and that legacy would have echoed in the adult uses of the rhyme. Now he exists as a powerless bogeyman from a dim past, and is only represented in omnibus collections.

It is probably not possible and not necessary to expurgate the violence in Mother Goose. A body of literature, such as nursery rhyme, should not be defended by saying that it is no worse than many another on a particular point. It is however true that nursery rhymes are no worse for violent content than is many another literary genre for children, for example folk and fairy tale. Nursery rhymes are much better than some examples of children's literature such as comic books

and their visual equivalent, the filmed cartoon. This latter material tends to exploit violence for the sake of entertainment.

It is not realistic to ignore violence; children meet it as early as they meet their nursery rhymes. Violence in nursery rhymes need not be emphasized in use with children; its presence is not unduly intrusive. It might be argued that life may be made, not better--never that--but bearable by the revelation of aggression and violence as a natural human reaction. Mother Goose, violent as she sometimes is, contributes in her traditional form to the development and growth of a child. She is a sturdy pabulum, expanding a child's vocabulary, introducing a wide range of characters, and training a child's ear to the musical cadence of language. It has frequently been said that Mother Goose frees a child's imagination; she charms the ear and delights the inward eye. It is advisable to take what Mother Goose offers without insisting on reform. She is redoubtable and will not readily recant her traditional ways.

REFERENCES

1. Reform of nursery rhymes has been called for in the past because of their nonsense, vulgarities and the cruelties they encourage children to practise. George Withers (1588-1667) is possibly the first recorded advocate of nursery rhyme reform. The influential Sarah Trimmer, early 19th century author of children's books and founder of a magazine, The Guardian of Education, roundly attacked the uselessness and confused notions of nursery rhymes. Many rhymes were bowdlerized, and many have changed over time in any case. In this century, the issue appears to have arisen in the late 1940's when Geoffrey Hall and Geoffrey Handley-Taylor wrote against use of the verses.
2. Modern illustrated versions always picture Humpty Dumpty as an egg so that the implied riddle of the verse is foretold. Hence it is easy to overlook the riddling aspect of the verse. Psychologists investigating this rhyme suggest that the fragility of the egg is juxtaposed, by children, with their own fragility. Both egg and child are threatened by permanent damage through the fall.
3. In a forthcoming (1977) study for Statistics Canada, Norman Bell, sociologist at the University of Toronto, found that 45% of murders in Canada were within the family unit. In Canada murder is a minor statistic, showing a slight increase from the period 1961 to 1974. Males are more murderous than females; Bell speculates that this is so because of role stereotyping that begins to teach aggression in childhood. Males may show a proclivity for murder as early as age six. The exception to males as murderers occurs in parents where children are more often the victim of a mother's action. Reported in "Research News", University of Toronto Bulletin, Nov. 10, 1976.
4. C. W. Valentine, "Innate and Acquired Fears", in The Normal Child, (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1956).
5. A simpler explanation for the action in the rhyme is that the verses are meant as swinging games played with babies and not as lullabies. Another rhyme has "baby swung up high, in an apple tree, when the apples fall, down comes baby, apples and all". Babies swung to various rhymes is common.

6. G. Handley-Taylor, "Nursery Rhyme Reform", (Manchester: True Aim Press, n.d.), pamphlet.

7. Philippe de Ariès in his Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life (New York: Vintage, 1972), documents the callousness induced in parents by the high infant mortality rate of the middle ages.

8. It has been stated by K. E. Thomas in The Real Personages of Mother Goose, (Boston: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1930), that the old man was Cardinal David Beaton (1494-1546), Chancellor under Mary, Queen of Scots, and enemy of English Protestants. He opposed the reform doctrines of the Covenanters, and in 1545, condemned George Wishart, Protestant martyr, to be burned. Beaton was stabbed by Wishart's friends and his body impaled upon the stakes of his castle at St. Andrew's, Scotland. In this case, if the connections with the nursery rhyme be accepted, the rhyme actually disguises the violence surrounding the circumstances of Beaton's murder.
 Thomas' book gives historical placement to several of the violent rhymes, as well as to the rhymes that are interpreted as ridicule. This last category is the one with most entries.

9. Both the 1715 edition and a popular illustrated edition of the 1840's are available in a facsimile reprint, together with notes and appendices, in The Juvenile Library Series, Divine Songs (Oxford University Press, 1970), 338 p.
 The publication of Divine Songs is coincident with two other works, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719) and Swift's Gulliver's Travels (1726), both of which rapidly became children's classics.

10. The place of Isaac Watts is discussed in F. J. Harvey Darton's work, Children's Books in England, 2nd ed., (Cambridge University Press, 1966), passim.

11. A variant beginning to "Rock a bye Baby" is "Hush a bye Baby" which may be a corruption of the French, "He bas, la le loup",--be quiet, there's the wolf--was a threat used to quieten French children because wolves were reputed to eat naughty children.

12. D. Bakan, Slaughter of the Innocents: A Study of the Battered Child Phenomenon, (Toronto: C.B.C. Learning Systems, 1971).
Explores the topic of child abuse including a brief chapter "what is revealed unto babes" that discusses the hidden portents of some nursery rhymes.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p. 60.
15. There is good factual support for the normality of whippings and beatings in schools of the 19th century, and presumably centuries earlier. Nineteenth century fiction has fastened upon the subject, with Dickens in David Copperfield and other writings perhaps taking the lead.

THE FOLK AND FAIRY TALE

Folk and fairy tales, like nursery rhymes, have survived condemnation and alteration to become securely the first literature for the young child. There are differences of definition that may be applied to fairy stories, wherein the little people help or hinder the protagonists, and the folk tale which may include the supernatural along with fragmentary history or bits of wisdom. The value of these tales for children are many and are not solely for the value of entertainment as thought Mrs. Sarah Trimmer, editor of The Guardian of Education. In the early 1800's, she wrote that such books are "calculated to entertain the imagination, rather than to improve the heart, or cultivate the understanding."¹ In this century which has almost totally accepted the value of entertainment, particularly in relation to education, the two last phrases are still contended. Some say that fairy tales do improve the heart and cultivate the understanding if, by those phrases, it is meant that the child matures into an integrated personality exhibiting ideal characteristics such as tolerance, rational behaviour, respect for self and others and so on. Others claim that fairy and folk tales, full as they are of magic tricks, cheating and falsehoods, unearned rewards, unpunished evils, lazy boys and greedy girls do not,

at best, advance the ideal development of personality. The stories distort reality and, at worst, frighten or emotionally scar children by their violence. The violence is both psychological and projected against the protagonist with whom the young readers identify.

Almost as soon as printing began these stories were taken from the oral tradition and recorded. There are Italian and French texts of fairy tales from the late 1550's but the book that immortalized them in written tradition was Charles Perrault's Histoires ou Contes du temps passé (1697).² This book also introduced the term Mother Goose into widespread use. "Little Red Riding Hood", "Sleeping Beauty", "Bluebeard" and "Cinderella" appeared, cast in literary form.³ All are worthy of examination as universal tales containing symbols of power and violence. Perrault writes clearly and simply, giving the tale a complete setting. Children, aged seven to nine, reading alone, often find Perrault's tales easier to read than the tales of Andersen or the Grimm brothers. Except, claims Elizabeth Cook in The Ordinary and the Fabulous, Perrault's "Red Riding Hood", which is "peculiarly nurseryish in manner and peculiarly savage in content, even if one doesn't suspect it of imaging sadism or originating in ritual murder."⁴

The story does create the image of sadism and does originate in murder, ritual or otherwise. Without symbolism or literary device, the story tells that a young girl, walking alone through an uninhabited wood on an errand, meets a wolf who acts like a man. This wolf-man questions the girl about herself and leaves. The girl hurries on to her destination, and with happy relief, arrives at the sanctuary of her grandmother's house. Trapped within the house, she gradually learns of her grandmother's murder by the stranger to whom she spoke in the wood. The man's sadistic teasing over, the child is raped. Why else undress and get into bed with the wolf? She is killed and mutilated in cannibalistic fashion. Perrault's original audience, the French upper classes of the late 1600's, were probably quite aware of the implicit horror, sexual assault and cannibalism in the story. These elements would likely be heightened by the historic times in which the audience lived. Some of the factual incidents of Perrault's time are more horrible than the fictions. The wolfman that Red Riding Hood met was not in the 16th and early 17th century the totally fictional character that "big bad wolves" are today.

Wolves were a dreaded predatory animal of north-central Europe, sheltered in the forested lands. In England, wolves were exterminated quite early, and hence no tradition of werewolf stories grew. But, in Europe, the werewolf was accepted because seeming proofs existed in persons of wolf-men.

Lycanthropy, a form of insanity in which men behaved as do the fictional werewolves, was an aspect of the general obsession with witchcraft and devil-mania that swept Europe in the middle ages. On limited evidence there seems no indication that women ever suffered from or were persecuted for lycanthropy. The syndrome associated with sexual violence and necrophilia, was recorded in males.

Peter Stubbe (or Stumpf) was a man who murdered, sexually assaulted, and mutilated fifteen young persons. It is claimed that he tortured animals when humans were denied him. It is also claimed that he butchered his victims in order to eat parts, including the brains of his own young son whose skull he battered. Although he had mistresses, he apparently committed incest with his daughter. When apprehended, returning from a graveyard, he claimed that he was a wolf. In those days, the claim was considered as a verity and not treated as an expression of insanity.

Pierre DeLancre, a Magistrate under Henry IV of France, wrote an account of another celebrated wolf-man case, that of Jean Grenier. Grenier inspired ballads and pamphlets and his horrible excesses were available as street literature of early 1600's. Fearing torture, Grenier, when arrested, confessed immediately and was sentenced in 1589 "to be broken on a wheel, with red-hot burning pincers in several places to have the flesh pulled off his bones, after that, his legs

and arms to be broken with a wooden axe or hatchet, afterwards to have his head struck from his body, then to have his carcass burnt to ashes". The good servant DeLancre reported the case in his Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels (1612) in which he documented his modest successes in burning 600 witches. The actions of persons, either within or without the pale of society, were so horrendous in the 17th century that some of the fictional literature deriving from the time is but pale reflection of the fact.

A child in such times was likely to have seen public violence, and the audience hearing "Red Riding Hood" were more attuned to the symbolism. Its impact has considerably diminished today. The symbol of the wolf, standing for the violence of sexual depravity and for a force of evil, has lost the power to horrify or to titillate. The illustrations in today's versions often show wolves either as big dogs or exaggerated Disney cartoons. The moral of tale, in Perrault's time, as now, is "little girls, don't talk to strangers". Few little girls expect to meet wolves in the woods nowadays so the story remains securely imaginative. Furthermore, the violence of the ending is diluted by the ritual conversation between wolf and child.

Grandmama, what great arms you have got!
The better to embrace thee, my pretty child.

Grandmama, what great legs you have got!
The better to run with, my pretty child.

Grandmama, what great ears you have got!
The better to hear with, my pretty child.

Grandmama, what great teeth you have got!
The better to eat you with, my pretty child.

Upon saying this, the wolf fell upon Red Riding Hood and ate her! Some versions end here, while others tell of nearby huntsmen or woodsmen who come to the hut and avenge the murder of Red Riding Hood by killing the wolf. A just ending to children, and therefore a happy outcome of sorts. In some versions, the woodsmen split the wolf's belly releasing the girl unharmed. This release together with the symbolism of the red cloak and hood is part of the evidence for the origin of this tale, not in folk history or experience, but in allegorical nature myths of death and rebirth. The forces of light and innocence, symbolized by the happy and bright child are met on their journey by the forces of darkness and evil, personified by the wolf who in medieval thought and in Northern mythology is the destroyer of light.

The sexual symbolism and the fears of deception, destruction, and invasion of home and person, in versions of Red Riding Hood are discussed at some length in an article by Lee Burns.⁵ He points out that Little Golden Hood follows more closely the death/rebirth cycle, and that golden is the colour of the sun, light and goodness. Red is more often the symbol of sexual desire, sexual maturity, as well as being a symbol for blood and violent anger. It seems plausible to

accept Red Riding Hood as a story of sexual violence, although children cannot realize this overtone.

Educational authorities in Ontario were only marginally aware of this connotation when they included the story in schoolroom readers. The authorities wanted the story in their readers, but also wanted to spare children thoughts of death. The version of "Red Riding Hood" in The Ontario Readers, at one time authorized for use in Ontario public schools is attributed to Perrault.⁶ But, it was thought more suitable to have the wolf invite Red Riding Hood to help him arise from the bed--he has been hiding under the covers. Just as he is about to eat the little girl a wasp flies in the window and stings him. "The wolf gave a cry and a little bird outside sang 'Tweet! Tweet!'" This told the green huntsman it was time to let fly his arrow, and the wolf was killed on the spot."

"Little Red Riding Hood" does not seem to be a tale that has frightened many children. Perhaps the fate of the heroine is overlooked in the rhythmical climax. There is conflicting evidence about the reaction of children to the physical assaults and insults in their first stories. Children in group story-telling sessions look excited, anticipatory and unworried by the violence. If queried as to the effect of the story, they will robustly state that the stories "didn't scare me" or give reassurance that the stories are "only make-

believe".⁷ Evidence of these tales frightening children tends to be based upon individual cases; children who have reacted with fear and night-time terror to stories such as "Hansel and Gretel" or "Babes in the Wood". These tales have great power to frighten the sensitive child because the protagonists are persons, and are not anthropomorphic characters as in "The Three Little Pigs" or a mixture of person and talking animal as in "Little Red Riding Hood". Unlike Red Riding Hood, who is an innocent and simple child within a loving family, Hansel and Gretel are unwanted children who display ingenuity and boldness of spirit. This tale was collected by folklorists Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, and is an example of the several tales in which small children outwit a witch or ogre into whose hands they have involuntarily fallen.

Abandoned children is a familiar motif and Hansel and Gretel opens at this scene. Hansel overheard their father and stepmother planning to abandon them in the woods, and is forearmed with pebbles to blaze a trail back home. Initially the parents are relieved but when poverty again pinches, the children are once more abandoned; Hansel lays a trail of breadcrumbs but, cruel fate, the birds eat the crumbs and the children are truly lost. At the moment of despair, they arrive at the gingerbread house, and tempted by sweet foods, are imprisoned by the occupant. Hansel is fattened to become the witch's dinner, while Gretel is the abused servant. Clever

Hansel delays his death with trickery as long as possible, and quick-witted Gretel, on the day appointed, manages to shove the witch into the flaming oven. A magic duck helps the children to find their way home. Fortuitously, the cruel stepmother has died. The children, with the witch's treasure that they thoughtfully stole, are able to end the family's sorrow forever.

Abandonment, or being lost, is a childhood fear. In this story the fear is explored with the children emerging victorious, able to solve not only their own dilemma but that of their family. The tale is rather more psychologically than physically frightening for although the oven is always described as burning hot with fierce flames, there is not any emphasis on physical abuse. Some children may feel threatened and be frightened by the tale but be reassured by the outcome. These tales can be reassuring, allowing a child to imagine abandonment, but holding a bad outcome at bay by use of satisfactory dénouement, and by setting the tale in "Once upon a time". When tales are told in an atmosphere of affection, the fantastic elements are appreciated, and the action is made safely distant by both time and place. Jella Lepmen, working for UNESCO after the war, reported that when a large exhibition of children's books was shown in Munich as contribution to rebuilding a divided world, "Hansel and Gretel" was protested.⁸ It was not regarded as an appropriate tale because both for some adults and for some war-scarred children the fantasy was

too close to recent reality. The witch's oven too much resembled the gas chambers of Auschwitz, and the effect of a 'distancing factor' was temporarily broken.

"Hansel and Gretel" is a more positive tale than tales wherein the outcome is death for the child. In this respect, "Little Red Riding Hood" beneath its veneer is a depressing and savage tale. So too, is the story of "Babes in the Wood", a tale of long standing that has fascinated or frightened children for many generations. Known versions of this ballad may be traced back to 1595. The tale has been in constant appearance ever since, sometimes as a chapbook, cheaply produced booklets sold by itinerant pedlars, or sometimes as a ballad or nursery rhyme. Two versions are in print today, the most readable being The Old Ballad of Babes in the Wood (Bodley Head, 1972) illustrated by Edward Ardizzone and based on a 1640 text in the British Museum.

The story is a simple one; a little boy and his young sister, taken to a wood to be murdered by hired ruffians, are instead abandoned.

Thus wandered these two babes
Till Death did end their grief
In one another's arms they died
As Babes wanting relief

No burial these pretty babes
Of any man received
Till Robin Redbreast painfully
Did cover them with leaves

In spite of the long publishing history which does indicate popularity, there is disagreement about the suitability of the story. The good Mrs. Trimmer (1741-1810) read and apparently enjoyed "Babes in the Wood" when she was young, but in mature judgment she "condemned the work unreservedly as being absolutely unfit for the perusal of children".⁹ Elizabeth Cook is presently of the same mind. In her introduction to myths, legends and fairy tales for teachers and story-tellers, she states that "Hansel and Gretel" and "Babes in the Wood" should be absolutely banned.¹⁰ Her reason basically is that no distance is possible when the fictional children and the listening children are of the same age. The identification factor is too strong.

Many children's librarians would agree, and would not recommend "Babes in the Wood", both because of its subject and the treatment of its subject. Kathleen Lines, children's editor for Bodley Head does not agree "...the verdicts are wrong. Children, in my experience, do not find the story frightening but rather look on it as vaguely sad. They love Robin Redbreast, and it is his long work, fetching leaf by leaf in his beak to make a covering for the Babes, that they remember, and keep as a lasting picture in the mind's eye."¹¹ When this attitude prevails, it happens because the child's interest is shifted to the action of the robin just as the recitation at the end of "Red Riding Hood" was diversionary.

Children are also protected by their innocence; they have no concept of personal mortality. Overall, "Babes in the Woods" appears to have little contemporary appeal and as there are few redeeming factors,¹² it may be just as well if this tale retreats into the province of scholars.

"Babes in the Wood", "Hansel and Gretel" and "Little Red Riding Hood" are about young children; it is more usual for the fairy and folk tales to be concerned with the fate of young adults. Thus, the children enjoying the stories have the distance from personal identification increased by age difference as well as by time and place. The protagonists are young princesses or princes, girls and boys of marriageable age. The stories are frequently concerned with a transition into rightful adult inheritance as kings or queens, or at the very least, as rulers of personal fate.

While young children in fairy tales are not always helpless--Hansel and Gretel save themselves--many of the adolescents need to depend on magic, or the advice and help of supernatural beings. Nonetheless, unlike Hansel and Gretel whose dearest wish was to return home, the maidens and youths are anxious to venture forth into the wider world. They confidently expect, somehow, to prove themselves. Both Jack the Giant-killer and Jack of Beanstalk fame are eager to win fame and fortune, by whatever means comes to hand--treachery, violence,

supernatural aid. The "History of Jack the Giant-killer" is first found in chapbook editions from the 1700's, and all manner of children and men were entertained by his bloody exploits. The Fieldings, Henry and his sister Sarah who expressed her literary talent in literature for children, as well as Samuel Johnson and William Cowper recorded a favourable mention of Jack.¹³ Cowper thought it a story in which native humour reigned, often useful and always entertaining.

When "Jack the Giant-killer" has been criticized in the past, it has been on grounds of production or style or because stories were held in certain times to be unprofitable rubbish. Few critics have been distressed at the physical violence throughout the tale. Stupid man-eating giants are tricked by Jack, and are dispatched with pick-axe, knife or Jack's magical sword of sharpness. Finally he meets his last giant, who cries aloud in the traditional manner:

Fee Fi Fau Fum
I smell the blood of an Englishman
Be he alive or be he dead
I'll grind his bones
To make my bread

The formula is common to British tales of cannibalistic giants;¹⁴ Jack wins through a series of giants, each more terrible than the last until he frees a kingdom, becomes a knight of King Arthur's Round Table, marries a Duke's beautiful daughter, wins

a fortune and lives happily ever after. The numerous killings have little reality, they are hurdles to be overcome on Jack's road to his adult inheritance. Since the giants represent evil, Jack may also be viewed as working for the good of society in defeating them. This is explicit when he frees people from a giant's bondage. The violence is held within an imaginary framework and there would be little purpose served in censoring "Jack the Giant-killer" or the numerous tales like "Jack" on the grounds of violence.

Fairy and folk tales are the first stories children encounter about growing up, and passing through, successfully, the difficult trials of maturation. The trials are often physical deeds, as when giants are slain or impossible tasks are accomplished. The trials also involve the control of strong emotions as revealed in violent incidents or fantasies that arise from thoughts of rage, hate and revenge. Step-¹⁵mothers uniformly appear as wicked women in fairytales. They frequently are the cause of the protagonist's plight. Cinderella's jealous and demanding stepmother who promotes and favours her own daughters is universally known. It was the stepmother in "Hansel and Gretel" who urged the abandonment of the children and whose removal was necessary to the happiness of the family unit. The stepmother in "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" rids herself of Snow White because of the sexual rivalry that Snow White represents. As stepmothers must be removed, she dies at

the conclusion of the story. In some versions the wicked queen simply chokes to death on her own thwarted rage. In other versions, less concerned with a literary nemesis and more concerned with a vengeful justice, she is forced at the wedding-feast to dance in slippers of red-hot iron until she drops dead.

The heroines in fairy and folk tales witness violent acts and even give silent approval. Snow White was not as forgiving as Cinderella in treatment of her step-relatives. The heroines however are not aggressive and do not engage in acts of deadly assault. There is the exception, as when Gretel (manfully) seized the opportunity to push the witch into the oven. Maidens are modest and passive as they enter their inheritance of marriage even though the stories can still feature bloody violence.

"Blue Beard" recounted by Perrault and generations since, tells of the young woman who married a fearsome blue-bearded man. The man was terrifying both because of his physical appearance and because he had been married to several wives who had disappeared. No matter, the girl's life was filled with fine dresses, jewels and delightful pleasantries. Forbidden to her was a single room in the house. Her curiosity overcame her promise not to enter the room. When, in fear and trembling, she unlocked the door, she found a room with walls clotted in blood and the corpses of murdered wives ranged

against the walls. As the blood would not wash from the key, her act is discovered, and she is condemned to join the other wives. Suspense in the story is built as she begs time to pray and sends her sister, Anne, to look for her brothers who have promised to visit. At the very moment when Blue Beard has grasped her by her long flowing hair and is about to cut off her head with his cutlass, the brothers arrive and run Blue Beard through with their swords. Blue Beard's fortune goes to the lady who shortly makes a happy second marriage.

The legend of "Blue Beard" has been attributed to many sources. The most common derives from the factual accounts of Gilles de Rais (1404-1440) a Marshal of France who distinguished himself on the battlefield as a companion to Joan of Arc. He also distinguished himself, even for medieval times, as an appalling torturer and sexual murderer of children and young people. His servants helped in his planned bouts of sadistic violence, and finally, when his position no longer could protect his excesses, he confessed and was burned alive near Nantes. There is little historic fact known, but there is enough to give some credence to the possible occurrence of de Rais in "Blue Beard".

"Blue Beard" type tales are widespread. A German version collected by the Brothers Grimm is "The Robber Bridegroom", and the English equivalent "Mr. Fox" was current in

the eighteenth century.¹⁶ The tale is short, easily told and has a strong rhythmical sense that delights children who hear it now, and who sit entranced as the suspenseful story unravels. The Lady Mary has decided to marry the rich, gallant and mysterious Mr. Fox. Before the wedding, Lady Mary visited her future home and saw above the gate, a sign which said:

BE BOLD, BE BOLD

Further along, above a doorway was a sign:

BE BOLD, BE BOLD, BUT NOT TOO BOLD

and then:

BE BOLD, BE BOLD, BUT NOT TOO BOLD
LEST THAT YOUR HEART'S BLOOD SHOULD RUN COLD

Lady Mary discovers the blood-stained bodies and skeletons of beautiful young brides and surmises her fate. Just then, Mr. Fox approaches with yet another victim. Quickly, the Lady Mary hides. Mr. Fox spies a diamond on the hand of the woman and tries to pull it off. When it would not come, he cursed and swore. He drew his sword, raised it, and brought it down upon the poor lady's hand. The sword cut off the hand which flew up into the air, and fell--of all places--in the Lady Mary's lap. On the next morn, which was the wedding day, Lady Mary tells Mr. Fox of her visit to the bloody chamber as if it were a dream. At each stage of the telling, Mr. Fox says, "It is not so, nor it was not so, and God forbid it should be so!" At the crucial moment, the

Lady Mary cries out in turn, "But it is so, and it was so, here's hand and ring I have to show." She pulled the severed hand from her dress, and pointed it straight at Mr. Fox. At once, her brothers drew their swords, and cut Mr. Fox into a thousand pieces.

In "Blue Beard" certainly, and in "Mr. Fox" less obviously, there is the motif of the one prohibition. One act, one question is forbidden, all else allowed. It was so in the Garden of Eden. It is so in the story of Pandora's box in Greek mythology. Whatever the anthropological or psychological explanation of this universal motif of the one taboo, it is clear that an awful punishment must follow on the breaking of such a powerful taboo. Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden, but that is unlikely to be a satisfactory punishment from the child's viewpoint. Pandora, the first woman, allowed all ills but hope to escape and to thenceforth be visited upon mankind. Again, children are unlikely to appreciate the visitation of vague ills as a terrible punishment, and they are much too naive to ponder the presence of hope in a box of ills. Intellectually, children only appreciate physical violence as horrifying. What lies behind the closed door must be as awful, as bloody, as their imagining can conceive, so, mutilated and multiple corpses seem appropriate. Retribution upon the evil-doer must be in similar measure, so Mr. Fox is not simply killed but is hacked into a thousand pieces. The violence in many of these tales is extravagant speech and little more.

Many tales telling an essentially simple story--adventure in a strange place, defeat of an enemy, triumph over an obstacle and so on--have roots in history or social anthropology which explain the violence. By and large, the tales are unlikely to frighten, and their most usual function is to entertain. Bruno Bettelheim, among others, has asserted that a number of these tales and the violence in the tales are positively helpful to the psyche.¹⁷ He follows Max Lüthi and others in asserting that fairy tales are important to a child's psychological growth.¹⁸

Bettelheim asserts that a central problem for a child is ascertaining the meaning in his life, and to extend that meaning to life in general. Initially, parents give the necessary help. Then the cultural heritage, which reaches the child through first stories, aids in the task. Enrichment comes from the stories if they stimulate imagination, develop the intellect, and satisfy emotions. The stories must reflect the aspirations and anxieties of a child, and fairy and folk tales are marvelously attuned to the conscious and subconscious thoughts of childhood. Fairy tales suggest solutions and resolutions to problems, albeit often violent ones.

The solutions that children might pose for themselves are very often violent. Children at the fairy tale age can feel emotion intensely.¹⁹ They are learning moderation and rationalization as a conduct for their affairs. Their fear, their anger, their hate is emphatic and extreme in

response to a situation that touches them, and so it appears only just to a child that rewards be liberal and punishments severe. Each person should be accorded his share in reward or punishment. G. K. Chesterton is frequently paraphrased on this point. He once remarked that children are innocent and love justice while adults are wicked and prefer mercy.

Violence operates as justice in fairy tales. It is a suitable conclusion to tales of intrigue and magic deeds, affirming to a child's intellectual and emotional satisfaction the fact that evil-doers will be punished and that the hero or heroine will be rewarded. The hero or heroine is always deserving from a child's point of view, although not always virtuous from an adult's point of view. This lack of virtue, in adults' eyes, usually centres on the failure of the central character to be dedicated, hard-working, or honest. Some critics of fairy tales see this lack of virtue as a detrimental aspect of fairy tale; the central characters often gain large reward by guile and without toil. On the other hand, to blunt the criticism, it would appear that both hope and comfort are offered to the undeserving in fairy tales. In numerous tales, the stupid and unwanted child (or adolescent) succeeds in winning the prize. Realistic tales are frequently less charitable or more contrived in introducing a mechanism that turns the undesirable person into someone altered, new and undeserving. The realistic tale often has a pragmatic basis

that is of little psychological value to the disturbed child. There are children for whom attitude and effort, the praxis underlying many realistic or simple anthropomorphic tales, do not accomplish a goal. Fairy tales admit of luck or magic which aids in accomplishing the goal.

'Happily ever after' may come about if all one contributes is hope and a willingness to carry on. "Rumpelstiltskin" a common English Variant on "Tom Tit Tot" is a story of greed, hope and happy ending. A somewhat feckless maiden becomes the bride of a greedy king because of her reputed ability to spin straw into gold. She enjoys her honeymoon as queen, but must bargain with an ugly gnome to get the spinning done. She promises either herself or her first-born child. She may redeem her promise, if she can guess the little man's name. Luck rescues her, and she is able to name the little man, and continue on in her unearned position as queen. She is a hopeful person, and her optimism is rewarded. The little man stamped with rage and dashed his foot and leg deep into the floor. In his fearsome rage, he then pulled at his leg so fiercely that he tore himself in two. Rumpelstiltskin's self-destructive act is extravagant, but appropriate if the symbolism of the power of names is appreciated.²⁰ The greedy queen reversed the balance of power between the dwarf and her. She freed herself from obligation, and indeed demonstrated a power over the dwarf. The children identify with the young queen, and they learn to hope for the happy outcome.

The tapestry of fairy and folk tale is woven of many layered strands, violence is but one strong thread. Violence is present as retribution, as extravagant speech and as awesome consequence of breaking a formidable taboo. It would be neither possible, nor useful, to pull the thread of violence away from the weave of fairy and folk tale. Violence is securely held within the fabric and is an integral part of the design.

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2. The frontispiece showed an old woman telling tales to three people beneath a placard stating "Contes de ma mère l'oye". Published in England in 1729, this work and other books like it became known as "Mother Goose's Tales".
3. Eight tales were in Perrault's 1697 volume; seven are universally recognized:

La belle au bois dormant	(Sleeping Beauty)
Le petit chaperon rouge	(Red Riding Hood)
La barbe bleue	(Blue Beard)
Le maistre chat	(Puss in Boots)
Les Fées	(The Fairies, or, Diamonds and Toads)
Cendrillon	(Cinderella)
Riquet à la houppe	(variant titles, a deformed prince loves a beautiful but witless princess)
4. E. Cook, The Ordinary and the Fabulous, (Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 47.
5. Lee Burns, "Red Riding Hood", in Children's Literature: The Great Excluded 1(1972):30-36.
6. Department of Education, The Ontario Readers: Second Book, (Toronto: T. Eaton Co., 1935), p. 29. Authorized texts 1923 - 1937.
7. G. McCracken, "Violence and Deception in Children's Literature", in Elementary English 49(March, 1972):422-24.
8. Jella Lepman, A Bridge of Children's Books, (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969), p. 59. A translation from the German, Die Kinderbuchbrücke.

9. F. J. H. Darton, op. cit., p. 79.
10. E. Cook, op. cit., p. 39.
11. The Babes in the Wood, (London: The Bodley Head, 1972), Afterword.
12. Most versions contain a later interpolation telling how the murder was avenged and the wicked uncle ruined. The moral is pointed, those in charge of infants should yield them their right, in this case, a patrimony. The final exhortation is not to be kind, but to be just in execution of financial affairs.
13. A brief history of "Jack the Giant-killer", quoting the interest of the Fieldings, Johnson and Cowper appears in Classic Fairy Tales, edited by Peter and Iona Opie, (Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 49-50.
14. As most students of Shakespeare know, the nursery lines 'Fee Fi Fau Fum' appear in King Lear, (III,iv).
15. The incidence of wicked stepmothers as against wicked stepfathers has been remarked. Psychological reasoning suggests that stepmother is a displacement for mother, and that an Electra complex underlies much of the hostility directed toward stepmothers. The fact that females, more often than males, tell the stories to children ensures that the feminine interest eventually dominates the fairy tale.
16. A full text of the tale may be found in Joseph Jacobs, English Fairy Tales, (London: The Bodley Head, 1968), number 26, pp. 92-94.
17. Bruno Bettelheim, The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales (New York: Random House, 1976).
18. Max Lüthi, Once Upon a Time: On the Nature of Fairy Tales (New York: F. Unger, 1970).

19. Robert I. Watson, Psychology of the Child, 2nd edition, (New York: J. Wiley & Sons, 1967), p. 295 ff.
20. Edward Clodd, Tom Tit Tot: An Essay on Savage Philosophy in the Folk Tale (London: Duckworth Co., 1898: reissued by Singing Tree Press, 1968).
Rosemary's Baby (Random, 1967) a best-selling novel by Ira Levin, made into a motion picture and reprinted for paper sales in 1976, shared elements from the fairy tale of Tom Tit Tot. Rosemary saves her baby by naming the sorcerer, thus freeing both herself and baby.

ILLUSTRATION

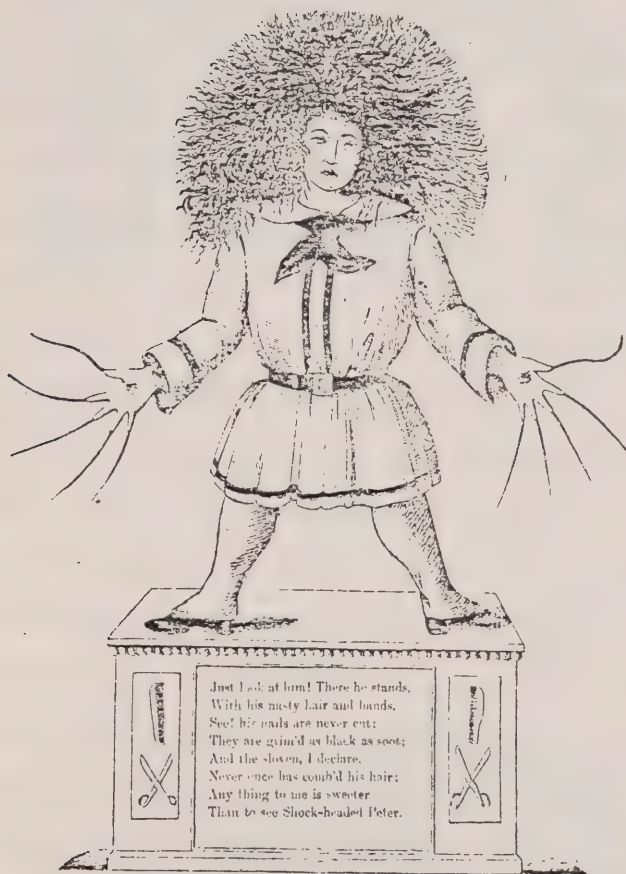
Illustration plays a major part in children's literature. There is much critical evaluation directed toward the art and the artist. Illustrators become as well known as the authors who write for children, particularly if the artist illustrates an anonymous folk or fairy tale. Pictures help young readers to visualize characters and to understand the actions of stories and poems. A child's first picture book may well be a story told without help of text. Such illustration must be graphic in order to clearly present the story. A cartoon or sketch which exaggerates qualities succeeds in doing this pictographic presentation very well.

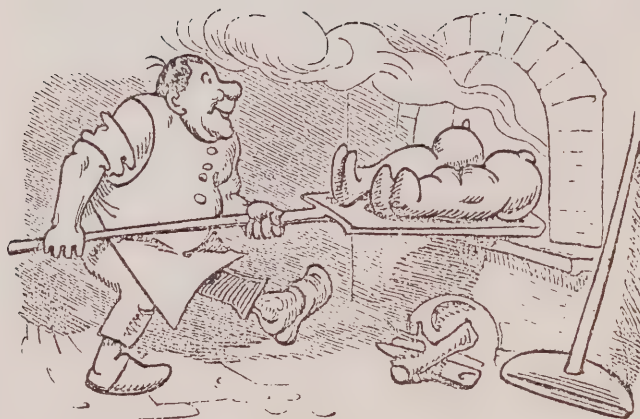
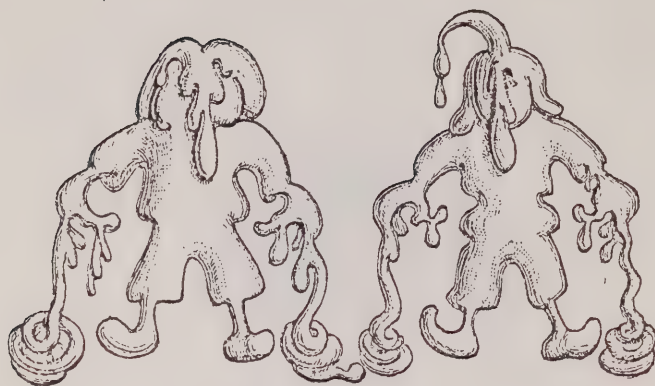
Walt Disney has built an industry on this cartoon exaggeration. The industry has both its champions and its critics. Certainly, because of their exposure to a Disney world in other media, young children rapidly learn to identify a Disney production, and want to buy and to read Disney products.¹ His champions applaud the family or nature-centred stories; his fare is decent, healthy, sanitary and with a happy ending. His detractors point out that he oversimplifies Nature, often for a sentimental end.² Critics of his presentation of creative literature feel that he mutilates folk and fairy tale disregarding anthropological, psychological or spiritual truths.³ Critics of his type of illustration assert that he

both stereotypes and grossly exaggerates. He frequently uses garish pictures in which all princesses are blonde sex symbols, all princes gorgeous young men, and all evil persons overdrawn. Stepsisters and stepmothers are misshapen and ugly; evil queens appear like comic book Dragon-ladies with black upswept hair, pointed eyebrows and glaring eyes. The big, black wolf has slaverling grinning jaws and could not possibly be mistaken for anyone's Grandmother. Children respond to these illustrations immediately with an indrawn breath of suspense released in giggles or screams. The critics point out that children constantly reacting to these overdrawn characters never realize nuance, nor develop sensitivity, and are gradually prepared only to expect or to accept exaggeration in illustration or in incident as they grow older. The way is paved for the constant comic book situation; material that is commented upon at length in Fredric Wertham's Seduction of the Innocent (Rinehart, 1954). Wertham, a psychiatrist, documents his opinion on the effects that comic books have on the minds and behaviour of children. He specifically examined crime comics in an era, the 1950's, when the incidence and illustration of violence, latent pornography, sadism and cruelty in comic books was being discussed in government commission and parent/teacher groups.⁴ Der Struwwelpeter, a children's book of horrors (though none quite as graphic in torture as crime comics) put on a spurt of sales in 1955 when crime comics were being debated

in the British parliament. Der Struwwelpeter, in translation Shockheaded or Slovenly Peter, published in English in 1848 was written by Frankfurt doctor Heinrich Hoffman to entertain his own children and young patients. The book contained nonsense verses and drawings about children with enormously bad habits and very rude manners. It is a book of Awful Warning not meant to be taken seriously, and, indeed for its time at least more lively and more entertaining than the dull moralistic children's books characteristic of the mid-nineteenth century. Parents who introduce Struwwelpeter to their children today report that one child may shrug away the stories while another will be very frightened by the great long red-legged scissor-man who cuts off thumbs and leaves poor Conrad crippled, his bleeding hands hanging limply by his sides. Three of the universally known German books for children have been criticized for the cruelties they contain. Hoffman's Struwwelpeter, Wilhelm Busch's Max und Moritz (1865) and Grimm's Märchen. Neither Busch (1832-1908), who produced satirical illustrated verse for Fliegende Blätter, nor Hoffman (1809-1894) were concerned to modify their art for children's viewing. Hoffman is said to have checked the woodcuts or lithographs from his sketches to ensure that "nothing pretty-pretty" was admitted.⁵

THE ENGLISH STRUWWELPETER: OR, PRETTY STORIES AND
FUNNY PICTURES FOR LITTLE CHILDREN, by H. Hoffmann





The influence of German illustration can be traced in modern illustrators like Maurice Sendak (1928-) or Tomi Ungerer (1931-). George Cruickshank (1792-1878), illustrator of Dickens, supplied the 22 full page engravings for the first English edition of Grimm's tales, German Popular Stories issued in 1823-6. Cruickshank also did not tailor his art to an audience of children although it is true that most widely-known illustrators of Grimm's have not emphasized the horrific aspects of the tales. The actual function of much of children's illustration then has been to emphasize, by visual presentation, elements within the stories. When these elements are horrific, violent or cruel, the illustrations may either increase or decrease the effect. The pictures may soothe the ugliness in a text or divert attention from it by drawing visual attention to some other item such as the fanciful characters or the environs of the tale. The pictures may exaggerate the horror for a sensitive child by making visually graphic that which his imagination could not conceive. This is unfortunate, but largely unpredictable because the reaction of a child is so individual. Catherine Storr, a children's author, tells the anecdote of one of her children who was frightened by both a tale and an illustration in Andrew Lang's coloured fairy books. The child fearfully thought of the story as the "hatchet picture you mustn't let me see".⁶

Some purists think that fairy and folk tale in particular ought not to be illustrated, but simply told. The telling creates its own imaginary landscape, painted by the child. A child may create a not-too-fearful witch or ogre, or a wolf that is large, but not unmanageably so. A child can usually cope with personal imaginings; a child may not be able to assimilate pictorial horrors created by someone else. Nightmare and nasty memories are the result.

However, it is now axiomatic to illustrate books for children; the younger the child, the greater the amount of illustration. The illustrated text, whether for children or adults, has a long history--as long as printing itself. The first books had pictures that were crude in content and in execution. They undoubtedly frightened some children and delighted others.

Adults do not seem to have worried over violence in the illustrations. Jack the Giant-killer was always shown at a crucial moment, pick-axe at the ready about to dispose of a giant. The giant is also usually shown, stupidly slitting his own belly open, fooled into doing so by Jack's example of pretending to slit his own stomach, (giants and ogres in British lore are usually stupid). The chapbooks containing the Jack tales and similar stories of conquest are like early comic books, the pictures supporting and advancing the story. The reading of these chapbooks was widespread among children and adults of the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries.



These books of former times tend to reflect an attitude that condoned frightening children, if by doing so, one might subdue them to the useful and the good. The Georgians and the Victorians were not squeamish about putting physical or mental violence in books for children. A message, graphically presented in text and in illustration, was meant to warn, to lift one's thoughts to heaven, as in the martyrology of John Foxe. Still in print today, editions or abridgements of Foxe's Book of Martyrs were surely perused for gruesome illustrations. The pictures in nineteenth century editions were more violent than in the original sixteenth century conception. Illustrations exaggerated the text. Illustration can also be used to ameliorate the text by increasing the distance between the reader and the story.

Both versions, in print today, of the historical tale Babes in the Wood show the young children dressed in the fashions of a hundred or more years before. Caldecott (1879) showed his characters in Shakespearian costume (tinted Victorian black for mourning) while Ardizzone (1971) showed his children in Dickensian period. Caldecott shows the dead children centred in the last picture. Ardizzone, with greater delicacy, in his last illustration shows the children, small in a corner, with Robin Redbreast prominent in the foreground.

BABES IN THE WOOD, illustrated by Edward Ardizzone



Ardizzone interviewed on the subject of his artistic style has suggested that the best effects are achieved through understatement. The minimum of line should suggest the expression or action. "One shouldn't tell the reader too much. The best view of a hero, I always feel, is a back view." Illustrations should leave something for the child to fill in; unlike the Disney school of art where the expected audience reaction has been planned to the last detail.⁷

Ardizzone is both author and illustrator and his books have been criticized to some extent, particularly the "Tim" books, because of themes of unreality and separation. Tim is a little boy, of resolute character, who at the early age of five goes to sea. Tim has dangerous adventures, faces death, shipwreck and fire. Ardizzone's personal favourite is Tim All Alone (Oxford, 1956) which won the British Kate Greenaway Medal in 1956 for the most distinguished contribution to children's book illustration. It is an emotional book in which young Tim arrives home from the sea only to find a sign on his house:

GONE AWAY
HOUSE TO LET

Tim is a stoical little boy, resolutely prepared to undertake a search for a missing parent. Generally, Ardizzone is praised for these sturdy characterizations. Ardizzone's heroines, Lucy and Charlotte, are equally independent and unsentimental.

The Tim stories recall the healthy outspokenness of nursery rhyme and folk tale; the stories confront ideas of separation and death which are not far from childhood's consciousness. A child may be helped by following Tim's example of stoicism and perseverance. Ardizzone's illustrations complement and elaborate the text; they do not overwhelm the child.

Tim in the modern series recalls Tommy Grimes from English fairy and folklore. Evaline Ness' illustrations in Mr. Miacca: An English Folk Tale (Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1967) mitigate the violence in Tommy's story. Mr. Miacca has been censured as frightening, for he is a bogeyman who boils and eats disobedient children whom he catches away from home. Clever Tommy tricks Mr. Miacca not once, but twice! Children like the short story because it is suspenseful, and because Tommy is clearly a match for Mr. Miacca. The illustrated version lengthens the brief story, without emphasizing the elements of violence and cannibalism. The use of pages of pictures tends to submerge the baldly stated facts of a short telling, and to create a solidly imaginary world as context. The setting is removed into the delightful nursery rhyme hodge-podge of architecture and costume. Tommy is an insouciant Dickensian urchin, and a child can enjoy the story with absolute faith in Tommy's ability to triumph.

Max, in Where the Wild Things Are (Harper & Row, 1963) is also, like Tommy, pictured as being in control of the situation. This book, an original story created by author-illustrator Maurice Sendak, drew some unfavourable initial criticism. Max is an unruly little boy who has been banished to his room without supper for acting like a wild thing. There, in dream, he voyages to the land of wild things and back again, to find his supper waiting for him after all. Sendak has said that Max is his favourite creation: the incident is based on personal childhood memory and is a kind of exorcism in that Max controls the nightmare. But, one reviewer asks, are children ever in charge of a nightmare? The book has "disturbing possibilities for the child who does not need this catharsis. Each child has his own fears and a catharsis is an individual matter. The pictures rate technically very high; some of them are beautiful. How children feel about the whole book remains to be seen."⁸

The book won a Caldecott Medal as a distinguished American picture book in 1964, and has been enormously popular with children who delight to have it presented in classroom or story hours. Another reviewer who said adults would query the book for many reasons, also quite rightly, said that children would accept it eagerly.⁹

Max is an angry small boy, anywhere from four to eight years old. He is the aggressor who easily tames the wild things, monsters who are grinning beasts. He becomes their king, puts a golden crown on his head and prances about as their leader. Sendak thought that unconsciously he was very influenced by King Kong and other monster films. His literary life as a child in New York City was dominated by movies, Walt Disney and comic books. Sendak was the first American artist to win a Hans Christian Andersen Medal, 1970, awarded by the International Board on Books for Young People, for an outstanding contribution to children's literature. In his acceptance speech, and in interviews, he has spoken of the children's books that have influenced his work. Some of these books he claims to have read in a late-blooming childhood. He was, he felt, deeply influenced by the German illustrators and the European roots as well as by English illustrators like Randolph Caldecott and George Cruickshank. Grimm's tales particularly appealed to Sendak, especially the first English edition illustrated by Cruickshank. He admired Der Struwwelpeter, "graphically, it is one of the most beautiful books in the world. One might complain about the cutting off of fingers, and the choking to death, and being burned alive, and one might well have a case there--but, aesthetically, for an artist growing up it was a good book to look at."¹⁰

Sendak was pleased to illustrate an edition of Grimm's tales, a two volume work called The Juniper Tree (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1974). This work is published as much, if not more, for an adult reader than for a young reader. The illustrations are identifiably Sendak, not one of his black and white drawings as violent as the stories in this edition. The difficult text primarily reflects an adult's interest in exactitude of retelling rather than a child's interest in adaptation of older folktale. In addition to the commonly heard tales of the Grimm brothers, like "Rapunzel", "Hansel and Gretel" and "The Frog King", there are tales like "The Juniper Tree", "Godfather Death" and "Many-Fur". "The Juniper Tree" tells the story of how a stepmother killed her stepson and set his dead body by the door. She encouraged her own daughter to box the boy's ears so that his severed head fell. The child, Ann Marie, was horrified, screamed and ran to her mother who blamed her daughter saying, "Ann Marie what have you done! Keep quiet and nobody will know. It can't be helped, we will make him into a stew." So the Mother chopped the boy to pieces, stewed him and served him to his Father for supper:

My mother she butchered me,
 My father he ate me,
 My sister, little Ann Marie,
 She gathered up the bones of me
 And tied them in a silken cloth
 To lay under the juniper tree.

There follows a long unwinding in which forgiveness comes to Ann Marie and the Father and retribution comes to the step-mother--her head is squashed by a millstone. The young boy is miraculously resurrected from the steaming ashes of his stepmother. The family is reunited without Mother and, hands joined in happiness, go into the house, sit down at table and eat their supper.

"Godfather Death" tells the story of the poor man with many children who gave his last born son to Death as Godfather, because Death in the end makes all men equal. Death helps his godson to become a famous physician by giving the lad a herb that prolongs life. When the young doctor misuses his gift, Death takes him to an underground place and there shows him the stub of his candle of life. The boy begs his Godfather to lengthen his candle which is burning low. Death agrees, only to purposely drop the new taper and so cause the boy to die.

The task of illustrating such stories appropriately is not an easy one. Sendak with his squatty figures and closely hatched lines, recalling the artists of the last century, succeeds. The pictures are very appropriate to the text. They hint subtly at violent elements, as when a hanged man's feet extend down into a picture from a top margin as in "The Two Journeymen".

This tale concerns two tradesmen, a carefree generous tailor and a prudent selfish cobbler, who make a long journey together. On the trip, the cobbler sells morsels of life-sustaining bread to his friend, for the price of cutting out first one eye and then the other eye. At night, in pain and in weariness, the tailor sleeps beneath a gallows on which two poor sinners are hanged. One of the dead men speaks, and tells the tailor to bathe his eyes with dew from the corpses and gallows intermingled. This dew will restore sight. The illustration is not as unpleasant as either the language or the content. The language is rhythmic in tone, and has the archaic flavour of lovingly-told tales, polished in their gruesome style. Children not frightened by the tales in Grimm will hardly be frightened by Sendak's drawings. Reviewers have called The Juniper Tree Sendak's best work yet, monumental and compelling. The pen and ink drawings are small but the figures loom large, filling the space with hypnotic power.

"The wicked Queen in 'Snow White' is like no other artists's--a motherly middle-aged woman pensively smiling. Only her bright, fixed gaze betrays her obsessive narcissism, her joy when she thought she had eaten Snow White's lung and liver."¹¹ "All the same, I don't think I'd recommend these volumes for the nursery shelves, just like that. It's true that the worst stories (in respect, that is, of the

THE JUNIPER TREE

illustrated by Maurice Sendak



"The Two Journeyman"

"Godfather Death"



terror they might cause) have the best endings. The fiercer twists of these folk tales--even their more brutal turns of humour--might disturb any child reading them alone."¹² The close dark line drawings of Sendak resemble in some ways the excellent illustrations of Gustave Doré who engraved the plates for Les Contes de Perrault (1862). Doré's wolf in bed with a surprised Red Riding Hood is a masterpiece, a delicate hinting at lasciviousness. An illustration from the story of "Little Poucet" showing an ogre about to cut the throats of his seven daughters was suppressed in the first English edition of these tales. Doré, like many of the best illustrators of children's work, did not illustrate primarily for children, but for adults and children alike.

The American Maurice Sendak and the Englishman Arthur Rackham (1867-1939) have been contrasted as the two twentieth century artists who represent opposite extremes in illustration for children's books.¹³ Sendak creates a psychological atmosphere at one with the text he illustrates, but Rackham produces a fantastical invention that is a cameo piece, replete with details of costume and setting. Rackham's emotional detachment may primarily appeal to adults and not always to the children. Rackham is an artist who can clarify the text but who can also complement it by his imaginative interpretation. Rackham admits that he was at one period very influenced by the unusual genius of Aubrey Beardsley. Rackham's

illustrations have appeared to at least one critic to be "unnecessarily repulsive...so often his characters, even the good ones, peer out of the dark embellished with carbuncles, thin dripping noses, gnarled and deformed limbs, cracking skin and tusk-like teeth. Like the forest scene in Disney's Snow White his trees sprout clutching misshapen arms and hideous chuckling faces, effective but also rather gratuitous in their seeming desire to frighten children at all costs."¹⁴ This may be true, but nonetheless Rackham's illustrations kept the frightening fantasies at bay by clearly indicating that the land was make-believe, a kingdom of faerie.

Rackham spanned the century, dying on the eve of the Second World War at the closing of a golden age of children's book illustration. War and post-war economies affected children's publishing and it was not until the 1960's that a resurgence of illustration in children's work once again took place. New techniques both in art and in printing allowed the re-emergence of artists, particularly in Europe, who used the children's book as a vehicle for a series of pictures on a subject. These pictures may not be violent, simply incomprehensible to children, as artists can express themselves without much regard for the children's tastes. Several critics, and artists themselves, have commented on either poor illustrations in both cheap and quality texts or poor texts accompanying handsome, well-produced (and expensive) picture books.¹⁵

Children, the audience who ultimately should be satisfied, appear to tolerate almost any illustration provided the story is one they enjoy. The bad art is easy to understand, usually accompanies stories with all the popular elements, and is readily available in the cheaper editions of children's books. The excellent art may sometimes be inaccessible; it may be too abstract, or surrealistic or unusual for children to appreciate unless accompanied by an absorbing story with which children can identify. Presently, English and American books are less likely to be influenced in this direction, but there are definitely artists who are producing material which is as much for adults as for children. Charles Keeping of Britain is such an artist. His list of books illustrated is numerous but in recent books his illustrations have become much more forceful. He illustrated two controversial novels based on Greek mythology and written by Leon Garfield and Edward Blishen. The novels are The God Beneath the Sea (Longman, 1970) and The Golden Shadow (Longman, 1973). Leon Garfield is a writer of historical fiction for children; he has been called a child's Dickens. Edward Blishen is an educator, editor and author of children's books. These men collaborated to produce two novels, updating Greek mythology by removing the Victorian upholstery and placing the tales in a narrative framework.¹⁶ The basis for this refurbishing was Robert Graves' The Greek Myths and became in these authors' hands a continuous account of the origin of the world, of the

struggle of man against the mysterious elements that surround him and against his own nature. Blishen states:

(We) have for a long time been concerned with what seems to us to be something that's happening inside children's literature, and is happening inside society as a whole. We're no longer quite so sure what children are, or who children are, or when children are. We must all be aware that in the last few years children's literature has been moving, at its senior end, closer and closer to adult literature. This book has certainly taken us further than we've ever been taken before in our writing for children. It has taken us very far indeed. We believe that it was essential to go as far as we have in our treatment of human passion and of violence, of necessary cosmic violence. We felt this must be done, it was right to do it, because these are the themes, the concerns, the preoccupations with which our children are, we know, at the moment filled. We offer no apology for what we hope is the meaningful violence which is written into our version, nor for our reference to the strongest of human passions.

(Children's Literature in Education, November 1970)

Reviewers were divided in their opinion on how well these authors succeeded in presenting these myths not as an antiquated collection but as a coherent account. One reviewer said that the myths were zestfully retold, "with striking flashes of language", "stripped of pseudo-classical draperies" and presented in a "highly coloured primitive atmosphere."¹⁷ Another reviewer, Alan Garner, himself a notable re-creator of mythology for children, calls the book rubbish, very bad and impossible to read! The prose is "overblown Victoriana... clich -ridden...falsely poetic, a grandiloquent mess."¹⁸ The review continues, quoting from the book:

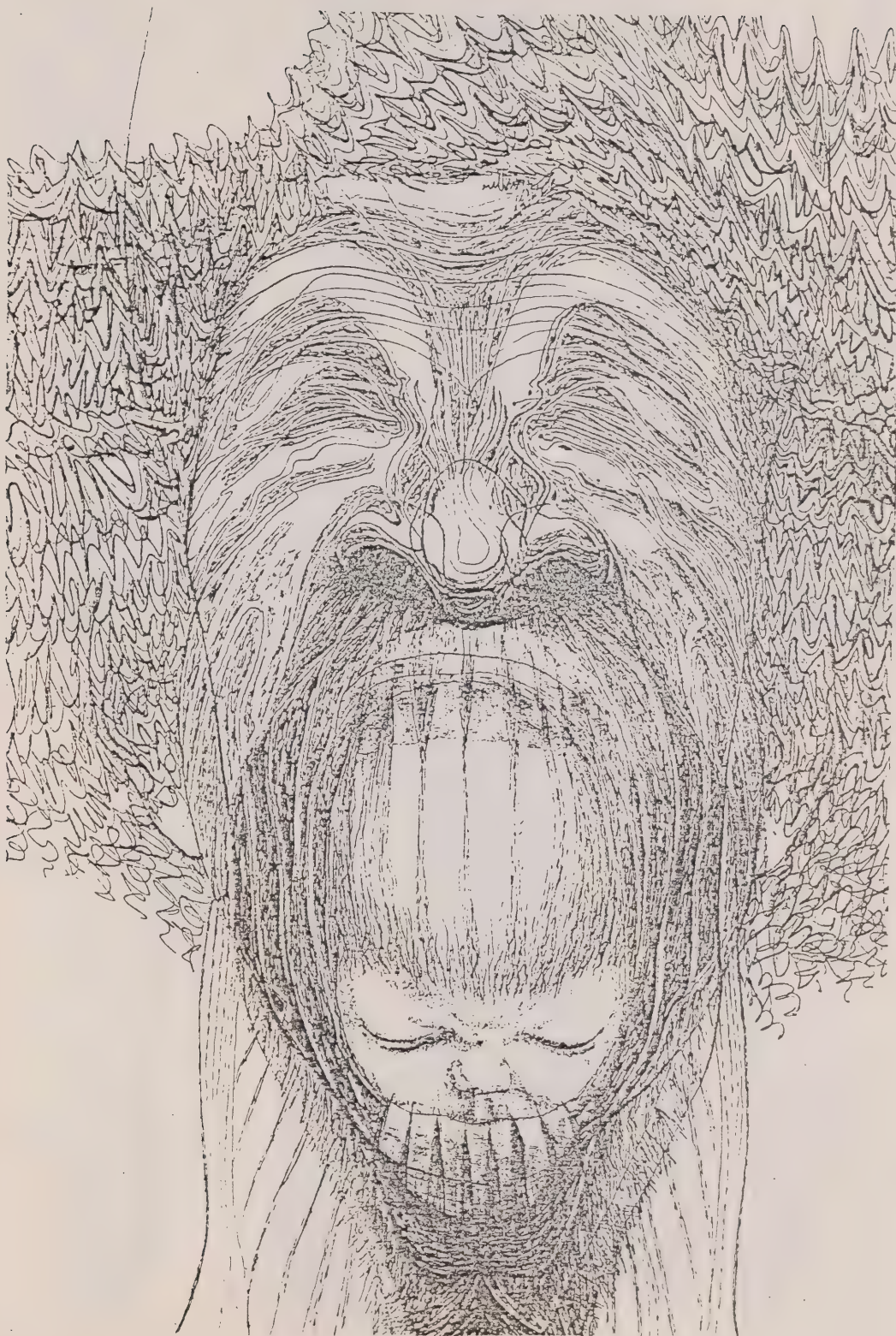
Worst of all the authors are so coy in their efforts to be frank about sexuality that only the cumulative absurdity saves them from prurience:

'...and in a white passion of wings (he)
quenched his restless heat'
'the Titan's daughter was already quick
with child'
'her time was at hand'
'her gown was torn, her hair awry and
everything about her proclaimed her ruin'

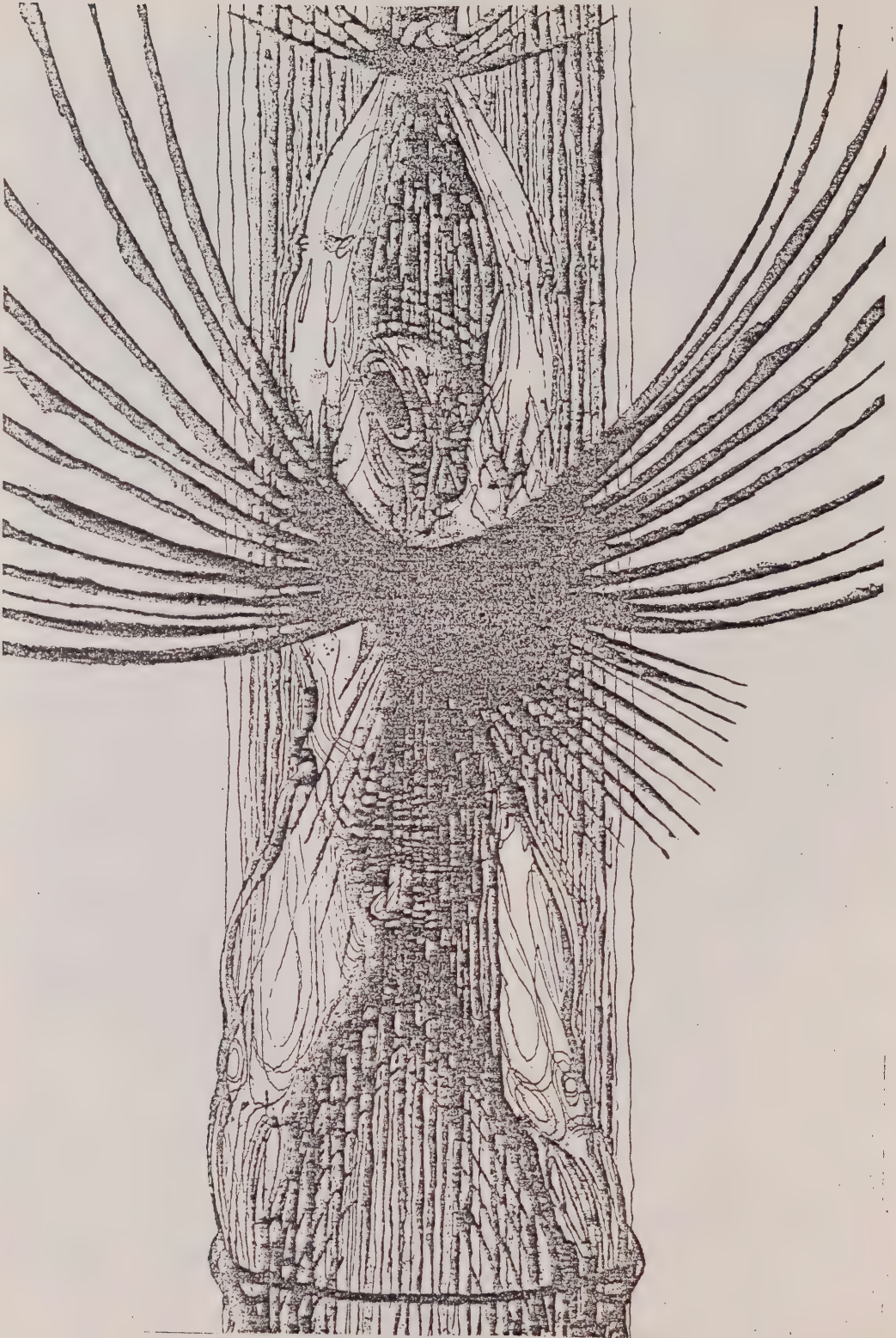
Whatever the text, the drawings emphasize the effect "relating the stories to the primitive roots of myth, rather than to the civilized commentators".¹⁹ The illustrator, Charles Keeping, (1924-) "justifies the survival of Greek mythology...a singular vision of what Classical myth must have been. Two drawings especially--Cronos and Prometheus--are more terrible and beautiful than Goya".²⁰ That praise is also a trifle overblown although not entirely inept.

The drawings certainly removed the Victorian upholstery, and departed from the Attic vase type of illustration that often accompanies these tales. Keeping found the myths disgusting because they are devoid of love and contain lust, rape, revenge and violence of every kind.²¹ As an artist he dislikes the problems presented by costume, authenticity and the freezing of picture/text into a particular moment in time. Keeping was concerned with people, emotions and reactions in a violent context. In order to project this violence and cruelty visually, Keeping tried for a symbolic overtone, and he left the final decision to the viewers. The

"Cronus" by Charles Keeping



"Prometheus" by Charles Keeping



"Heracles" by Charles Keeping



black and white drawings are emphatic, illuminating and upsetting. In this case, the illustrations rather than alleviate a text, actually augment the physical and psychological violence.

Talking on illustration generally, Keeping has defended himself against the charge that picture books today may be disturbing children.²² His defence was that it was difficult to see how anything could be more disturbing than the violence in such tales as "The Juniper Tree". Keeping feels that with the immediacy and impact of film, his books have changed. His recent books are consciously unlike any of his earlier works. As an author-illustrator he has recently produced three books that were originally turned down for publication because of the sophistication of the themes. One picture book, Joseph's Yard (Oxford, 1969) dealt with loneliness, jealousy and death. Another, The Garden Shed (Oxford, 1971) dealt with humiliation.

The third, Through the Window (Oxford, 1970) for children in kindergarten through grades three, is about boredom and indifference. Keeping said it dealt with the rejection of an unwanted sight, and that the sudden violence which results in a death is "shown but not in its worse sense".²³ In the picture book, Joseph, the boy in the story watches the street below through his window. An old woman and her dog live on the street. One day, Joseph sees the dog trampled by

galloping horses from a nearby brewery. The old woman then picks up her dog. Joseph mists his window pane with his breath and draws a stick figure of the woman carrying her dog. Both dog and woman are smiling. The stick figures are crude, as a child's would be, and are not unduly alarming. There has not been widespread report on any child's reaction to this picture book. It is quite possible that the book vaguely confuses rather than frightens or disturbs. It is the adult critic who has pointed out that since the text must be read without reference to any of the illustrator's background comment on the symbolism, the apparent pleasure of all parties in the scene is difficult to interpret. Even understanding the author's purpose does not make the book less disturbing, only more intelligible. How does a child react to or understand Joseph's response to this unhappy incident? Is the boy pretending that death has not happened? Keeping would agree with that interpretation. Is such a pretence a good defence for a child if, for example, the child faces the grief of a pet's death? This is neither a healthy nor a useful concept to present in a picture book.

Through the Window is one of the books mentioned in "Themes of Violence in Picture Books" a short paper by K. Harris presented at an annual convention of the New York State English Council in 1974.²⁴ She finds it a most distressing

book, and would probably agree that Keeping has entered a stage of very mature, powerful and disturbing artwork. Harris also criticizes two other children's books for using violence heavy-handedly to present two moral issues.

The Hunter, the Tick and the Gumeroo (Cowles, 1971) by George Mendoza is a moral tale, though not one readily comprehended by children. It is that man destroys his own life in destruction of wild life. A suitable moral for the ecologically conscious generation but not suitably presented. A hunter, on the trail of the fierce gumeroo, shoots first a rabbit and then a quail as he goes along. A small wood tick attaches itself to his cheek and, as the hunter scratches, a lump grows around the tick. Quickly and malignantly the lump grows, until in desperation, the hunter turns his gun upon himself--or at least upon the monstrous growth engulfing him. The lump recedes, and the man is left dead with a neat bullet hole in the centre of his forehead. A pessimistic book, showing suicide to the child. Would a more constructive tale have resulted if the hunter's lump, like Pinocchio's nose, was reduced in size every time the hunter performed an ecologically good deed?

Another book mentioned is a much criticized picture book of a few years ago, Bang Bang You're Dead (Harper, 1969) by Fitzhugh and Scoppetone. The publisher's jacket on this book states that it is a simple and effective presentation of a child's first discovery of the reality of war. The moral is

a pacifist one. In this picture book, a number of children play at war on a favourite hill. When rivals appear to claim the hill, a real street fight with sticks and stones is fought on a pre-arranged day. The text is as graphic as are the pictures:

"Give up, puke face. You don't have a chance," said Big Mike.

"Up your nose, you freak-out," yelled James.

Many children are hurt. Violence is the central commitment of a book purporting to sell peace. The book is twenty-nine pages long; there are thirty individual sketches of bruised, bleeding children, and nine pages are devoted to the battle. The incidence of violence is magnified when it occupies the full page spreads of a picture book. In longer books, violence may be much more diminished by being only one visual representation among many, or by being only a few paragraphs among pages of text. In long stories, violence may well act as justice, a summation in a paragraph or two. At the end of Bang, Bang..., the children decide that it hurts too much to really fight. They will share the hill and return to pretend wars of "bang, bang, you're dead." In this case, the publisher's claim is not tenable; children's fisticuffs are not actual war, and while the moral may be a good and useful one, it is lost and denied in a book whose pictorial and textual content is given over to violence.

Harris mentions a picture book done by Jean Tomi Ungerer, The Beast of Monsieur Racine (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1971) with particular reference to the background pictures which show a world in chaos. The violent backdrop is in contrast to the non-violent humorous tale. Mr. Racine discovers a strange beast in his garden. This beast becomes an object of scientific curiosity. Before an audience of scientists, the beast reveals itself as two giggling children. What an embarrassment for Mr. Racine and the learned gentlemen! There is a riot in the gallery. Mr. Racine understands, and forgives the children their prank, so all remain friends. A gentle satire upon learned societies, a funny story and a non-violent one except for the background. Here there are various maimed, trapped animals or people violated or violating. There are the acts of the rioters, individually, as when a man breaks a chair over a woman's head, or, collectively, as when the crowd overturns a bus. A woman shoves her artificial arm into a man's mouth while other cripples display empty sleeves or artificial limbs. In a humorous tale with a good story, why include gratuitous violence? Although the beast, Mr. Racine and the characters are all line drawings and odd looking, they are not shown as living in a fantasy world. These people may be caricatures, but they are all operating in a context of reality. They are human beings behaving in aggressive, hostile and murderous ways. This book won the New York Times Choice

of Best Illustrated Children's Books of the Year in 1971 and a Children's Book Showcase Title in 1972; "the artist is in rare form, liberally spreading his particular kind of madness--in full color--over every page. The double spreads are Hogarthian with caricature and frenetic activity; to children the pictures will be roaring slapstick."²⁵ Ungerer, even more than Sendak, has been accepted slowly as a children's author-illustrator. His work as an artist for adults has been more widely acknowledged. His poster art is possibly pornographic, often bizarre and nearly always satirical, like his artistic mentor Wilhelm Busch.²⁶

In his children's work the satire is more controlled and although elements of the bizarre creep in, the ending is always happy. His tales are filled with disaster, accidents, mechanical breakdowns and the casual violence of modern life. In The Hat (Parents' Magazine Press, 1970) a dashing cadet, while flirting with a young woman, flicks the ashes of his fat cigar into an occupied baby carriage. Is the occupant to be incinerated? The style of illustration is the open sketch, possibly a lampoon for parents and a cartoon for children. This type of picture is cited as an example "of Ungerer's clear-eyed documentation of the folly and wickedness rampant in the world...the excitement he provides is out of the daily range of most well cared-for children and responsible adults, but it always seems to be within the realm of life's larger possibilities, the very ones that cause us all so much hidden anxiety."²⁷

In No Kiss for Mother (Harper & Row, 1973) a bad spoiled boy-cat exasperates all about him. There is quarrelling, fighting and spanking and tantrums. In the far background of one scene, there is a soldier looking suspiciously as if he could be a Nazi officer, and the grey-black drawings create an unpleasant pre-war atmosphere. Only adults may see these disturbing nuances, probably the children simply delight in crash-bang and rumpus. They must! So much of their literature is full of life in a violent uproar.

Much of the violence is of the slap-stick type, so characteristic of animated cartoons of the late 1950's. Cartoons of the "Bugs Bunny" or "Tom and Jerry" type where massive violence was dealt to characters who perennially snapped back for more assault. A good example is The Bear and the Fly (Crown, 1976) a picture book without text by Paula Winter. Meant for the very young child who can follow the story through pictures, the book shows a family of bears. Father Bear tries to swat a fly, breaks the house apart, knocks himself and his family unconscious in the attempt. Father Bear acts as a young child might, heedlessly hitting out without forethought of consequences. Perhaps children enjoy this scenario because it often reflects their own behaviour. Perhaps nurtured on television cartoons, they simply like to see violence for the sake of its action and surprise.

By Paula Winter



Illustrations that are violent occur at any given time within the history of publishing for children, except perhaps for some carefully produced books for children sheltered in 19th century nurseries. . . Gruesome and frightening illustration even crept into these sanctuaries by way of acceptable nursery literature like Mother Goose, Awful Warning and Divine Songs. Illustration of violence was present in the not-quite-so-acceptable but flourishing popular literature like chapbooks, penny dreadfuls, and comics.²⁸ At worst, some of these illustrations are horrific and surely frightening to a sensitive child; at best, they are in poor taste. Reasons can be advanced to justify, or at least to explain, the past and continuing presence of violence in children's illustrations. The violent element could hardly be unexpected given that so many of the incidents in children's literature are violent. Sometimes, the violence was considered by adults to be a positive good, having educative value in making explicit the punishment that would follow on certain actions. Violence is excitement, and therefore an always indispensable part of popular literature -- which, naturally, is an economically viable proposition. The popular literature follows a fashion, and permissiveness is a recognized trend in modern media. Children's literature follows more slowly, and always to a more censured degree, the fashion in adult literature. The mass media for adults permits the artist-illustrator to depict aspects of

sexual violence, pornography and eroticism more openly now than in the past. In this area, the artist's freedom to express himself has been released from the artificial constraint of publisher's requirements, and this new freedom is apparent in children's books. A child sees both the newly admitted types of violence (sexual) and the age-old types of violence (physical, psychological) which intermittently come under attack. Children may choose books from the panorama of all that has been published for them because, unlike publishing for adults, children's literature has a timeless quality. Children unknowingly read books from the past and see the work of long-dead artists. Wilhelm Busch, Gustave Doré, Cruickshank, Caldecott, Kate Greenaway, Walter Crane, Leslie Brooke, Arthur Rackham and so on may be readily viewed in books on sale today. These past artists exist alongside the presently active artists like Sendak, Ungerer, Keeping, Ardizzone, Brian Wildsmith, Nancy Burkett, Roger Duvoisin, and so on. The list is long and honourable.

Several artists, now as in the past, do not produce solely for children. Their work reflects the maturity, artistry and style of individual talent. No one would wish it otherwise, in case art for children becomes the sole province of hack workers. There is a great array of art for children to view, and it happens that a number of talented artists do not choose to emphasize the violent aspect in illustration for

children. They produce aesthetically pleasing art, created from non-violent motifs such as ethnic costume, fantastic and fabulous fairy kingdoms, caricatures and colourful abstracts and collages. Their technique and their personal mode of expression is not attuned to the violent, even when the violence is present in the text. These artists alleviate the text, and also give the child a visual dimension that extends his perception of art.

With all the variety of art in children's literature, it is difficult if not impossible to measure the quality and quantity of violence that appears in children's illustrations. Even if measureable, what then? The issue of violence would come down to the assessment of each work individually. There would be the contribution of the artist to consider, and his desire to interpret freely the text in graphic terms. There would also be the variable influence of a given illustration on an individual child. Children should be always encouraged to banish the picture that they feel they mustn't see. Few persons argue any longer for the natural innocence of children and for their over-protection. It is not possible nor desirable to shield children from what is painful, frightening or violent; pictures in the child's book are part of that presentation. The danger then lies not in presenting violent material to children but in presenting it gratuitously, emphatically, frequently and in a mode that distorts the role of violence. Violence should not be

glorified, nor consistently presented as a mode of appropriate action. The text of violence should not always be given visual emphasis. A visual amplification of violence is most apt to happen in the popular art of today, the photograph and the comic strip. Children do share with the whole community whatever art forms exist, and they share in full measure the popular art of film and comic strip. As the popular art expresses violence, children will see violence. Keeping children from viewing too much gratuitous violence, or violence unrooted in total context, is a two-fold problem. In the first place, the popular art which is not often intended for children at all but in which children participate, has to become less violent in order not to expose children. In the second place, the exceptional and good quality art in children's books should be made more accessible to all children. It is likely that the first condition may be met as the fashions in art (both the art of illustration and of literature) change. If the milieu for expressing violence becomes more circumscribed, not perhaps from the force of law but from the dictates of fashion, than it is at present, the art will follow suit, particularly for children. The problem of making children's literature and good illustration, whether it expresses violence or not, more accessible than the popular art is extremely difficult and not solvable in the foreseeable future. The media that creates popularity can help to popularize the good

as well as the bad. The educators and parents can continue to promote the children's literature hoping that the solution is to make this literature at least as accessible as any other popular art, so that children will have an opportunity to discrimination in visual taste.

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THE REALISTIC NOVEL

The realistic junior novel has become a major part of publishing for children and young adults. It is welcomed by parents, educators and librarians on several grounds, particularly for the middle and high school children, the audience for most of these books. The junior novel is often considered to remedy reluctance in reading and so is promoted in classrooms and school libraries. The National Council of Teachers of English issues an annotated list of these adolescent books "to read, to enjoy and to grow by." The fifth edition, *Your Reading* (N.C.T.E., 1975) includes notes on over 1500 junior books, fiction and non-fiction. The junior novel remedies reluctance in reading because the format tends to return to initial steps in book introduction. There is reduced vocabulary, shortened sentences, larger or wider-spaced type with fewer lines, many illustrations and action plots or contemporary stories. Discursive exposition, descriptive passages or character analysis are largely absent. The strong narrative must frequently employ action; the simplest action is the excitement or suspense generated from physical or emotional violence. Thus increasing realism in these books is often equated with increasing levels of violence.

In addition to the increased readability of the junior novels, there is the argument that these books are contemporary, dealing with the realities of adolescent life

today. The N.C.T.E. recommended booklist for junior high students is divided into sections on being adventurous, free, a family member, being friends and in love, being physically handicapped or just growing up.

The new permissiveness in adult fiction generally has filtered into adolescent literature. In many ways this is a positive move allowing certain unhappy or struggling teens to realize that their problems are not unique. At other times the sordid, violent aspects presented have caused critics to dissent, asserting that children learn attitudes from the books that they read, and that the incidence of aggression or violence is conducive to anti-social acts. The trends in children's literature parallel trends in the other mass media.

For adolescent girls, the material is not overfull of violent activity. Cultural, psychological and biological factors tend to inhibit women from becoming the aggressive sex. Writing tends quite naturally to reflect these inhibitions. Girls read about family relationships, romances and problems of being physically attractive and some social problems such as prejudice. The books do not tend to overplay violence; sometimes it even seems unreal. In Natalie Carson's The Empty Schoolhouse (Harper & Row, 1965) a young black girl has difficulty integrating into a white school. The townspeople react violently to the

integration, take up arms, and the girl is shot in the foot. The townspeople all are immediately contrite, the heroine is redeemed and the integration is a fait accompli. The violence is totally subordinated to the 'heroine' fantasy in a book that is neither worth condemning nor promoting for its simplistic approach to racial problems.

Violence is more realistic in the books of Kristin Hunter. In Soul Brothers and Sister Lou (Scribner, 1968) one black youngster is killed as young musicians in a ghetto are harassed by police. Eventual success does not erase the pain of early experience. Hunter's Guests in the Promised Land (Scribner, 1973) is a series of short stories about black teenagers in housing projects, on welfare and employed in menial jobs. William Armstrong's Sounder (Harper & Row, 1972) is an example of a typical book on racial tensions presently produced for teenagers. Sounder is a story of poor black families before the Civil Rights movement. When the son in the family visits his father, imprisoned for a theft of meat, the boy is humiliated by the guard and dreams of a brutal revenge. Both boys and girls read with enjoyment the stories that deal with problems of minority groups, and there is much publishing in this area.

Publishers also find a market in books that are aimed at female adolescents and deal with problems of

"boy meets girl," marriage, or pregnancy. A Wild Thing (Macmillan, 1970) by Jean Renvoize tells an unhappy and violent story about a girl who lives in the wilds, a semi-feral child. She has been attacked by the villagers to whom she went for help. This is a pessimistic book, and of it the author said;

A Wild Thing was written as an adult novel and published as such in England, but the American Publisher considered that the book would do best if presented as a young adult book in the States. It was inspired by a news item of an actual boy whose bones were found on a Scottish hillside and whose identity was discovered primarily from his dental condition. He was about twelve and an orphan. From that I developed the story of a girl of nearly sixteen whose eventual fate was similar. My new novel is unlikely to be published as suitable for adolescents.
(Contemporary Authors 41-44, 1976:505)

The book was cited as an American Library Association Notable Book of 1970, indicating that the publisher was quite right about the marketing of the book as 'young adult' in the United States.

An American example that is more frightening than many in dealing with the reality of abortion is Bonnie Jo Go Home (Bantam, 1973) by Jeanette Eyerly. Bonnie Jo, a 16-year old is in an unfamiliar city trying to rid herself of an unwanted pregnancy. The details of an abortion late in pregnancy are dwelt upon, and the book appears partly to serve the age-old purpose of Awful Warning.

Awful Warning too are some of the books dealing with drugs, another concern of modern realistic fiction. Go Ask Alice (Avon, 1972) is typical example and one which became a film. Alice is a girl of middle-class affluent background who becomes hooked on drugs and who suffers degradation and exploitation because of her habit. Eventually unable to control her life any longer, she commits suicide. Drugs interest boys as well as girls, and there are numerous titles to cover the subject, from Frank Bonham's Cool Cat (Dell, 1971) to Maia Wojciechowska's Turned Out (Harper & Row, 1968). In Cool Cat, two friends, Buddy and Little Pie, aspire to getting out of their drug-ridden "Dogtown". Buddy wants to be a lifeguard and Little Pie a police cadet. The friends manage to start a hauling business with a truck. The truck is maliciously damaged by a rival gang, and Little Pie retaliates by destroying the gang leader's car. Life on the street, gang fights or personal vendetta are a part of most of these books concerned with contemporary urban teenage life. The violence is part of the scenario, and does not totally dominate the story.

Books for boys tend to have much more aggression and violence than do books for girls. Not that girls are denied the violent stories, on the contrary, girls read the stories that are written for them and girls also read the stories written for boys. Boys, on the other hand, will rarely read girls' books. Both boys and girls read titles

that are written for the adult audience.

Curiously, an early and popular junior novel about gang warfare was written by a teenaged girl, Sally E. Hinton. The Outsiders (Dell, 1967) is about three brothers who live together in poverty. The youngest boy tells of constant fighting between two gangs, the Socs and the Greasers; fighting which kills one boy and aids in the destruction of several others. Gang war, drugs and teenage daily life in a slum neighbourhood is part of Hinton's That Was Then, This Is Now (Dell, 1971). Hinton defended her insistence on violence on the grounds that violence is part of a teenager's life.¹ It would appear that violence in real life is also part of the young child's life and literary times. In addition to the violence of folk and fairy tale when a corporal or capital punishment is dispensed in a few paragraphs and is used as a kind of rough justice, there is also the violence that is not neutralized by fantasy.

There are children separated from, or abused by parents or molested by strangers. There is also evidence of violence resulting from emotional disorder appearing as entertainment for children in their first picture books or stories. Julia Cunningham's Dorp Dead (Pantheon, 1965) tells the story of Gilly, a self-contained intelligent orphan, who is taken into the household of the town eccentric, Mr. Kobalt, a wood-worker. Gilly is happy in the meticulously ordered life of this household

wherein "no carelessness or rearrangement will ever be permitted." Gilly is soon taunted by children his own age who think him as mad as Kobalt. When Gilly glares at them defiantly, the children, frightened at the strangeness that defies them, back away, and Gilly retreats even more into the solitary clock-regulated confines of life with Kobalt and Mash his dog. One day, Mash is bloodied and beaten and when Gilly has the courage to question Kobalt, Gilly is told that "He (the dog) is getting old. I will soon need another dog and Mash must learn to die." At that Gilly wonders if he too is learning to die. He learns that a wooden cage is being prepared for his prison, and he realizes that pain gives Kobalt pleasure. Gilly disturbs the organization of Kobalt's workroom, subconsciously testing the reaction of Kobalt who flies into a murderous rage. A major part of this story concerns Kobalt's attempts to destroy Gilly and Gilly's eventual escape. At the crucial moment when Gilly is injured and has no resources left, the dog Mash attacks Kobalt and saves Gilly. As Gilly goes to a new life he leaves a last misspelled message on Kobalt's door. The message is *Dorp Dead!*

The book features an 11-year old boy and is suggested for ages ten and up although it is probably read by children eight to 12. It has been both condemned and praised; whatever its literary merit it is certainly

an unusual book to present to young children. It does however show Gilly as escaping and does have a happy ending; readers may be pleased with these elements and be unaffected by the objections of adults. The happy ending is contrived and so departs from the actual realism that is lauded, a realism that recognizes emotional disturbance and hints at folie à deux that underlies the plot. The themes of mental illness, alienation, disaffectation and rejection with the implied emotional or physical violence, are present in literature for quite young children.

There is yet another theme related to violence that creeps into adolescent literature for boys, and is frequently found in books studied in English classes. Jean Kelty mentions some of these books in a short paper "The Cult of the Kill in Adolescent Fiction" presented at an Annual Conference on English Education in the Elementary School, 1974.² The theme is that the killing of something, such as an animal, is a rite de passage, an initiation into manhood.

Kelty rightly remarks that the stereotyping of girls in literature as passive onlookers has recently been well documented. Boys have been shown to do more adventuresome things, be involved more than girls in activities, and also range further afield to follow their more interesting pursuits. There is, unremarked upon, a parallel stereotyping of boys, a conditioning to violence,

that may be more injurious to society generally than the relegation of the female to a passive role.

Many books dealing with the coming of age of young males show that manhood and maturity is attained by pitting oneself against the animal or natural world. Often the animal or natural world is symbolized as evil, alien to man, and external force that must be fought. The defeat of the external evil establishes the maturation of the boys and his ability to conduct himself henceforth as a man among men. In contrast, a few books portray the fact that maturation may be a battle with self, an issue of self-acceptance or self-understanding.

One book that troubles Kelty is The Yearling (Scribner, 1966) by Majorie Kinnan Rawlings. The Yearling is sometimes read in classrooms in Ontario anywhere from grades nine to 11. Originally published in the late '30s, and winner of the 1939 Pulitzer Prize Award, it is a much more substantial novel than the junior novels of today and thus lends itself to discussion in the classroom. Jody Baxter and his family live in the Florida scrubs eeking out their living by hunting and trapping when necessary. As the book nears its end, Jody must kill his pet deer who is destroying the crops by which the family lives. The act is Jody's admission into manhood,

acknowledged by his father, but as for Jody "He did not believe he should ever again love anything, man or woman or his own child, as he had loved the yearling. He would be lonely all his life. But a man took it for his share and went on." Kelty asserts that while such acts as killing pet animals may be inevitable and that while Jody, forced by circumstances, did what was necessary, he did not grow into maturity thereby. A boy does not become a man by killing that which he loves and determining not to give love to any person again. Actions such as those portrayed in The Yearling tend to telescope the act of inflicting pain into the pain of grief. Jody might grow to maturity by experiencing pain and grief, but that is not to be confused with inflicting pain. The same theme is repeated in Fred Gipson's Old Yeller (Haper & Row, 1956) a perennially popular tale in which a boy must kill his dog because it seems the dog might develop rabies. The family is unwilling to wait and see if the dog does become rabid; they simply "can't take that chance". The boy's father tells the sorrowing boy "try to forget it and go on being a man." Often the animal is not a pet but a wild animal as in Verne Davis' The Devil Cat Screamed (Morrow, 1966) in which a young cowboy comes face to face with a cougar that he has chosen for a personal enemy. Or the enemy may simply be animals in general as in Hal Borland's novel When Legends Die (Lippincott, 1963) written for older boys. Tom Black Bull,

a young disillusioned Ute Indian takes out his frustrations and anger against white society by treating harshly the horses that he rides in rodeos. This book carries the story further than completion of a violent act as growth to manhood, in that Tom decides not to kill a bear he has stalked. He realizes that his trouble is within himself. He rejects the self that was the senseless killer, the devil-rider of rodeo circuit, and he finally finds peace and maturity in resolving his identity problems by means other than violence. Boy against nature or animal is too familiar a theme to be multiplied here.

Robert Newton Peck's A Day No Pigs Would Die (Knopf, 1972) an autobiographical story follows directly in the tradition of The Yearling or Old Yeller. The language has matured in Peck's book, but plot, -- boyhood into manhood in rural America -- remains the same. The book opens with Robert telling of viciously and repeatedly kicking a cow in the udder as she gives birth. For this help in the birthing, he receives a piglet. Another incident in the book describes a dog and a weasel fight in which both animals are trapped in a closed barrel until there is a victor and vanquished. A Short moral tag on the brutality of such a fight accompanies the many paragraphs devoted to the description. There is also a lengthy description of mating the pet pig to a boar (a topic that would formerly have been forbidden in children's literature). Pinky the pig is barren, and the climax of

the book occurs as Robert must help his father butcher Pinky. His father tells him that this action is "what being a man is all about, boy. It's just doing what's got to be done." The father touches the boy's face with his "cruel pick-sticking" fist and Robert cannot keep himself from kissing his father's bloody hand. "I kissed his hand again and again, with all its stink and fatty slime of dead pork. . . So he'd understand that I'd forgive him even if he killed me." The National Council of Teachers of English recommend this book as a Vermont 'Walton' family in which the problems of adolescence are helped by an understanding family and friends.

Violence as the initiation into adulthood is a universal theme. The initiation is concomitant with the acquisition of skills. The boy has learned to use a gun, or a hunting knife, or a rodeo lasso or a weapon/ implement of some sort, and now demonstrates that skill. The practice of martial arts, including the skills of judo or karate, confer the status of manhood. The association of skills with initiation is more clearly seen in movies rather than in books, because the techniques of violence can be stressed and visually displayed in ways not possible with print alone. Thus the hero, or the super-man in film, is also the super-user of his weapons or his fists. His technique of karate or judo is incredible

and/or his markmanship superlative. Violence may be presented as a flaw but it is one in which both villain and hero share. The hero has acquired more skills with his arsenal of weapons than has the villain and so it is not brute strength alone that determines the outcome. Although if it comes down to an issue of strength, the heroes are not lacking. Initiation into and demonstration of leadership is dependent upon display of violent skills. This is a familiar motif in many westerns or crime dramas that are published for adults, but that are read by adolescents as well.

As a doctoral dissertation, Gloria Blatt, did a content analysis of the violent episodes in children's literature.³ She sampled 170 realistic novels, all of which were selected by the American Library Association as Notable Books for Children published between 1960-1970. The purpose was to determine any change in the proportion of violent episodes in each story on the list over the decade. Episodes were analyzed according to the total space devoted to violence, the details or intensity of descriptions, the role assumed by the heroes or villains, the relationship of the participants and the kinds of violent acts perpetuated as well as the value judgment placed on the act. A violent action was defined as an overt expression of force intended to hurt or kill. Books were scored on all these factors in a systematic way,

and the findings for all books in a given year were averaged and a trend established. The discernible trend over the ten year period was toward a greater expression of violence. On average, the number of pages devoted to violence increased from 12 per cent in 1960, to 15 per cent in 1970. Interesting enough however Blatt found that while the actual depiction of violence increased, the expressed or implied approval of violence by the authors marginally decreased over the decade.

The books were divided into categories of modern realistic and historical fiction. Modern realistic fiction scored 11 per cent on the average of total pages devoted to violence while the average for historical fiction was 23 per cent, more than twice as much aggressive action. The disparity occurs because historical fiction frequently concerns war. When historical fiction books with war settings were separated from those with non-war settings, the average score for the former was 35 per cent while the average score for the latter was 17 per cent.

With regard to who was committing the violence, it appeared that increasingly over the decade the heroes in the story were instigating and committing the violence. Villains still committed more violence than heroes. Twenty-three per cent as against 18 per cent, but the gap between good guy/bad guy was not wide. More than half of the

aggressive deeds were done by minor figures. Unlike the actual situation in life where violence most frequently occurs between persons who are related or acquainted, the violence in books tends to occur between strangers. Almost all the violence (67 per cent) occurred between strangers. In historical fiction there is the clash between warring strangers and only in realistic modern fiction does some violence between intimates occur. The degree of intimacy is often at one remove or more from violent clashes with parents. In Dorp Dead the boy fought with a newly appointed guardian, and frequently the violence occurs between children and their guardian, whether relative or housekeeper.

The aggressive activity in the notable books of 1960-1970 included a full range with shooting and simply killing appearing most frequently. Action was counted as violent if it included belligerent sports such as boxing, or wrestling. The treatment of details was realistic with many details included which would appeal to the senses of the reader. Authors depend on word pictures and on illustration in many children's books to create the illusion of reality, and so, much detail contributes to the creation of the illusion. In the majority of books in the study the writers included information about the effects of the act of aggression. Much of the aggressive literature functions not only as initiation to manhood but also as socialization to violence,

to cruelty, to an insensitvity to life in order that children, particularly boys, might be prepared for aggressive action in life including soldiering.⁴

In Blatt's study, violence was central to the story in fewer than ten per cent of the cases studied, and most of these stories tended to deal with war. World War II is a popular topic, in both fiction and non-fiction, in publishing for adults. The themes of war read by adults are also popular in juvenile versions. There are many stories of civilian life in an embattled country such as Martha Stiles' Darkness Over the Land (Dial, 1966) or Eric Haugaard's The Little Fishes (Houghton, 1967). Some stories such as Treadgold's We Couldn't Leave Dinah (Cape, 1941) are essentially non-violent. The story is about children, German and British, members of a pony club who discover German invasion plans on their Channel island in the 1940's. The book was popular during the war years, and was reprinted frequently until the mid-1960's. Carrie's War (Kippincott, 1973) by Nina Bawden is a domestic, non-violent story about a girl and her young brother who are evacuated to Wales for safety during the war. These stories are more child-like in their appeal. They tend to explore relationships between people rather than to capitalize on the action of combatants as do many stories of war. Fiction about war is not extensively discussed in this material on violence in realistic fiction for children and

adolescents, because, a priori, violence is present in many of these books. Violence may well be the central core of war stories.⁵

While war is a present theme in children's literature, crime and the hunt for criminals, a familiar TV drama is largely absent from books of good quality written for children. (An obvious exception are the series books like "The Three Investigators . . . ", "The Hardy Boys . . ." etc.) Lockhart Amerman's Guns in the Heather (Harcourt, 1963) was the only book about criminals elected as a notable book by the American Library Association in the decade, 1960-1970, of Blatt's study. The verisimilitude of a cops and robbers shoot-out is not easily achieved in a book for youngsters. The violent incident, so telescoped and emphasized on the television screen is not reflected in children's literature.

Some books involving criminals and mysteries have been promoted into standards for children, John Buchan's The Thirty-nine Steps or Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novels. The series books like the Hardy Boys, or other dauntless lads of derring-do, pit themselves in a battle of wit and sometimes a physical skirmage against criminals. But violence is not central to the plot, and the ultimate goals of major characters are rarely achieved through force. In children's books, the characters are not always uniformly well developed in the literary or artistic sense but there is time in a book to indicate

character development and to provide solutions in terms of increased maturity, external circumstances, or a hovering deus ex machina rather than to solve the ending by violence.

Blatt's study on violence in a selected sample of notable books concluded that for the most part treatment of violence in realistic fiction for children is a reflection of aggression in real life. While incidence of conflict in books may have increased somewhat in quantity, it has not changed appreciably in quality. Conflict is treated honestly without becoming the focal point of many stories. When there is fighting, readers may learn something about human behaviour and its results, because there are both realistic details and a certain amount of characterization.

As television has a relationship to reading, it is pertinent to compare the violence found in books and on the home screen. Blatt determined that the sample of children's literature analyzed was much less violent in content than the average television film. Even historical fiction, frequently concerned with war, was significantly less violent than television drama. Her statement was based on a calculation from the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (U.S.A.) which estimated conservatively, that an average of 6.7 acts of

violence occur every hour on television. Blatt noted that if each of these episodes takes three minutes then 20 minutes of every hour is concerned with some form of aggression. That is, 33 per cent of the time as opposed to an approximately 11 per cent average of violent incident by content in the notable children's books of 1960-1970. Television writers are seeking the sensational to keep viewers interested, and so the level of excitement is deliberately kept high by the use of such devices as violence. Violence is integral to the plot in television but is most frequently peripheral to plots in children's literature. The periphery of violence in books is also indicated by the characters involved in the violent activity. In the literature the violence is often committed among minor characters. Television however is working within time restraints. This constraint tends to reduce the number of characters, to simplify the characterization, and, perforce, to pit hero against villain.

Television has either been excused or accused for sanitizing violence. The consequences of a violent action such as a shoot-out do not appear to the viewer to be too painful. The victim of a gunshot falls to the ground and is silent. The camera may move away to show, not the victim, but the reactions of others in the scene. The details of the suffering victim are hidden. There are

no continuing screams of pain, nor moaning, nor bleeding. However, increasingly television watchers can expect to see more bloody and realistic scenes of suffering as the impact explosives to simulate wounds on actors used in films on first run at theatres move onto the home screen.

The book, on the other hand, tends not to turn from the moment of violence, but to extend it in order to further the illusion of reality on the part of the reader. In The Yearling, written in the late '30s, the following description of an animal's death is given. Flag, the yearling, has just been ineptly shot by Jody's mother and lies floundering beside a fence:

Jody ran to Flag. The yearling heaved to his three good legs and stumbled away, as though the boy himself were his enemy. He was bleeding from a torn left fore-quarter.

Flag ran on three legs in pain and terror. Twice he fell and Jody caught up to him. He shrieked, "Hit's me! Flag!"

Flag thrashed to his feet and was off again. Blood flowed in a steady stream. The yearling made the edge of the sink-hole. He wavered an instant and toppled. He rolled down the side. Jody ran after him. Flag lay beside the pool. He opened great liquid eyes and turned them on the boy with glazed look of wonder. Jody pressed the muzzle of the gun barrel at the back of the smooth neck and pulled the trigger. Flag quivered a moment and then lay still.

(pp. 409-411)

In Sounder, published 30 years later, almost the same scene, the shooting of a pet is described. The

dog, Sounder, has been callously and casually shot by a sheriff's deputy:

Sounder tired to rise but fell again. There was another yelp, this one constrained and plaintive. . . . Sounder was running, falling, floundering, rising. The hind part of his body stayed up and moved from side to side, trying to lift the front part from the earth. He twisted, fell, and heaved his great shoulders. His hind paws dug into the earth. He pushed himself up. He staggered forward, sideways, then fell again. One leg did not touch the ground. A trail of blood, smeared and blotted, followed him. There was a large spot of mingled blood, hair and naked flesh on one shoulder. His head swung from side to side. He fell again and pushed his body along with his hind legs. One side of his head was a mass of blood. The blast had torn off the whole side of his head and shoulder.

(pp. 27-28)

In the passage from The Yearling, there is not much blood nor physical detail in the description of the deer's death; the writing is concentrated upon the relationship of the boy with his deer, and emotional tension is derived from the identification of the reader with Jody. In the passage from Sounder, the violence is described in some detail and almost from the point of view of bystander. The reader has time to assimilate feeling about the scene and to respond with the emotions that the writer wished to evoke, shock, grief, indignation, frustration in the face of personal helplessness.

Children reading these junior novels may draw parallels between aggression in books and violence in real life. They also may be helped thereby to tolerate, or to understand conditions in their lives. Therefore, the advent of more realism in children's books is heralded. There is an opinion that junior novels about the ills of society and the problems of youth bridge a much-discussed generation gap. The books are a way to help young people overcome feelings of alienation and anomie.

Thus, these novels, about subjects of concern to adolescents, are promoted as being both interesting to the age group and therapeutic in nature. The therapy is generally thought to depend upon catharsis, in literary terms, the purification of emotions through the purging of drama. Deriving from Aristotle's Poetics, literary catharsis has been modified to mean the exercise of those feelings which enable a person to respond morally to occasions of dramatic intensity. Destructive emotions, of low or brutal origin, are presumed purged by the stimulus of a higher emotion such as pity or fear or by a constructive act of compassion, charity, love. By extension, in the bibliotherapeutic view of the use of books, these constructive emotions include a growth in personal development, an understanding of others or self, or an act of self-governance, self-help and so on.

The theory of catharsis has provided protection to much violence in traditional arts. The assurance of social or religious usefulness has excused the presence of violence in portrayals of a saint's martyrdom in religious paintings above altars, and in portrayals of a Western gunslingers' shoot-out in books or on film. However while the secular art may be as iconographical as the religious art in its presentation it is not as protected by cultural tradition. This lack of protection, and the emergence of the mass media has focussed attention on the presence of violence and on the nature of catharsis. The theory of catharsis has come under serious attack, and has been discredited as a beneficial effect of viewing violence on film. Catharsis in literature, or rather the bibliotherapeutic view of the use of a realistic novel is still widely accepted in publishing for adolescents. The belief in the utility of a contemporary plot about situations of 'real life' accounts for the sometimes uncritical acceptance of junior novels. Literary or artistic qualities of style or presentation are subordinated to the plot.⁶ Violence as a reflection of life and as catharsis is admitted widely into literature for children and adolescents.

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1. Sally E. Hinton, "Teenagers Are for Real," New York Times Book Review, (August 27, 1967):29
2. Jean Kelty, "The Cult of the Kill in Adolescent Fiction," 12th Annual Conference on English Education in the Elementary School, Cleveland, Ohio, March, 1974, ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 090563
3. G.T. Blatt, "Violence in Children's Literature: A Content Analysis of a Select Sampling of Children's Literature and a Study of Children's Responses to Literary Episodes Depicting Violence." PhD. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1972, ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 072439
4. Science fiction a genre not considered in this survey is frequently concerned with the conditioning of people to callous responses. The plot may be centered on invasion, or interplanetary war or some such. The quality of violence and its uses follows a similar pattern in the fantasies of tomorrow as in the realistic novels of today.
5. The reading of an historical account of the German Third Reich is popular among adolescent boys. Biographies of Hitler, whether ill or well received by the critics, whether slim and fictionalized or scholarly and thick, are popular with adults and adolescents. As this paper is presented to the Royal Commission on Violence in the Communications Industry, a new book Adolf Hitler (Doubleday, 1976) by John Toland is a current best-seller.
6. James C. Gibling, "Violence: Factors Considered by a Children's Book Editor," Elementary English 49(January, 1972):64-67.

Gibling, editor-in-chief of juvenile books at The Seabury Press discusses the problem of editing violent incidents in children's books. He asserts that problems arise not because of content but because of the author's treatment.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it may be fairly stated that violence is of definite interest to children, and there is much in their environment that nurtures that interest. Children's literature contributes, although its contribution is variable as to quantity and quality of violence portrayed. A surprising amount of violent activity is present in literature for the nursery and for the young child who emerges from his crib into the world of fairy and folk tale. This literature for young children does have its violence securely within a context of the imaginary and magical world of fantasy.

The violence is exaggerated speech, or retributive justice, it is rarely callous or disaffected. It is grounded in fantasy, and its physical description cannot be confused with normal events in everyday life. Latent violence and hostile innuendoes may, as some folklorists and psychologists assert, appeal to the subconscious, but the appeal is not explicit and cannot be recognized by children. The interpretation of allegory and symbolism is far beyond the sophistication of young readers, who accept the stories at their surface value of 'make-believe.' It would be difficult to ascertain the harm that the violence in these fantasies may do. It has been argued that a positive good frequently results from a knowledge of these tales. The

violence is a small part of the overall contribution that nursery literature makes to the aesthetic, moral and intellectual development of the child.

Violence in the literature of childhood becomes more questionable in the formative years of early schooling when the children turn to comic books, the realistic novel and the popular culture as their literary pursuit. Children demonstrate in the stories and jokes that they tell each other, and in their language and reading preferences an appetite for violence. They also demonstrate an appetite for the poor and mediocre literature which frequently employs violence as a device. The appetite for poor quality literature and for violence is encouraged by television. Television is the most accessible cultural product to children, and possibly the medium to which most attention has been directed in the presentations to the Royal Commission on Violence in the Communications Industry. The appetite for violence is also encouraged by the print media that promotes popular culture through advertisement of entertainments or through sensationalism in news reporting.

Presently many people are concerned that the media of popular culture are saturating the social climate with violence, and with its concomitant areas of obscenity and pornography. Without suggesting that censorship is the answer, it does seem that some self-restraint is indicated.

One theoretical argument for censorship is that democracy, more than any other form of government, depends upon the restraint of the persons involved in self-governance. Whatever contributes to the loss of self-restraint leads to a breakdown in obedience to the rules whereby a people collectively govern themselves, and paves the way for either an anarchical or a more totalitarian regime. As the popular culture informs the reactions of many persons, laws governing public amusements may be of utilitarian value to society. Aside from the utilitarian value, there is an ethical value involved in dealing with an issue of the presentation of violence. It can surely be agreed that the communications industry should exhibit, to some degree, a responsibility toward society's educative goals for its children.

The goals change. A clear indication of society's interest in the education of children can be seen by studying the literature of children from generations past. Presently however, the value goals that society would wish to inculcate in children would be a self-restraint, a respect for individuals and a sense of social responsibility. All of these goals are negated by gratuitous violence.

A certain amount of violence is necessary, either because it mirrors an actual happening and is therefore a realistic and truthful presentation, or because

the violence reflects a psychological truth, and is therefore also realistic. Violence is associated with an aggressive drive, and with a problem of defining assertion. In particular boys, as readers show an interest in violent material. They feel a need for challenge and adventure which is interpreted as proving manliness. In former times, there may have been manual labour at an early age, or the vicissitudes of frontier life, or enlistment in the army, to satisfy a need that is presently fulfilled vicariously through sports, books and television. Television in a pronounced way, and books in a less pronounced fashion, frequently present adventure or challenge as a drama predicated on aggressive violent activity between persons. Aggression is a normal drive, necessary for a realistic mastery of life; aggression is something every child is endowed with in varying degrees and the problem is one, not of aggression itself, but of restraint and direction.

Literature should help in teaching restraint and direction. Whatever aids in this undertaking should be promoted, and whatever hinders should be, for children, monitored and discouraged. Before the 18th century, the literature for children was as violent as the literature for adults. No distinction was made between what was thought suitable for children and what was thought suitable for adults. By the 19th century, a separate

literature for children was developed and it grew throughout the century. This literature did not reflect reality for a majority of the population; the children who read these books were, to a large extent, sheltered in the emerging middle-class homes. Much of the literature was noticeably non-violent, presuming children to be innocent of violence. Children in the lower classes of England and America still had ready access to a violent literature and a violent way of life. Before the end of the century, the penny dreadfuls and comic papers were flourishing, and their blossom has not yet diminished.

Children are no longer presumed to be innocent, and presently children can read a wide range of literature on a multitude of topics. Children's literature, with the exception of comics, is not a transgressor in promoting violence as an appropriate and attractive mode of action. Even the realistic novel, dealing with contemporary issues in adolescent life, including the portrayal of violence, tends to depict the violence in diminished quality and quantity when compared to the popular medium of television.

The acceptability of any element, including violence in children's literature and in literature for young adults is dictated by external forces. This literature is very responsive to the adult view of childhood and adolescence. Currently, there is a permissiveness in the approach to writing for these groups, and as that

attitude changes -- if it does -- so will literature. It should also be noted that the intensive reading of juvenile literature of some difficulty, is essentially a minority pursuit among the children and young adults. It would therefore seem more profitable to address the extent of permissiveness which allows the expression of violence in the more popular media of the communications industry. For the expression here creates or encourages a fashion in books.

As the violence in the wide range of juvenile literature, one can only recommend that children and adolescents be encouraged to read more widely than within the narrow range of sub-literature, such as comics, television spinoffs, mediocre pulps, that so frequently uses violence as a ploy. How to encourage wider selection is a problem for education. The presentation of literature requires informed guidance on the part of parents, educators and persons concerned with the development of children. Possibly the communications industry which exacerbates the problem can also help to alleviate it by educating adults and children, and by presenting alternatives that are less dependent on violence for a central interest.

It may be the function of government and of citizenry to aid in investigating the avenues that allow for such development. It is not novel to remark that children are our greatest natural resource. Logan Pearsall Smith once observed that uncultivated minds,

unlike uncultivated fields, are not full of wild flowers.
Villainous weeds grow in them and they are the haunt of
toads.

